PART II: METHODOLOGY AND TECHNIQUES OF KRIYA YOGA

Disclaimer

The techniques described herein are exposed for study purposes only and should serve as a comparison with the works of other researchers. The author hopes this work will inspire intelligent feedback. Any remarks, criticism, corrections, and/or additions are welcome. Before you begin posing all kinds of questions to yourself, read through Part II and Part III of this book so you have a thorough understanding of the matter. You'll find that as you go through it many questions will be answered.

I wish to make clear that this book is not a Kriya Yoga manual! I may write one and face the problem of dividing it into different lessons and giving all the necessary instructions for each level. However, certain delicate techniques e.g. Maha Mudra, Kriya Pranayama, Thokar, and Yoni Mudra cannot be learned from a manual and require the help of an expert to check their execution. Each person is different so it is not possible to predict what effects an intensive practice might have on a particular individual.

The author disclaims any responsibility in case of negative results, especially if the techniques are practiced without first having their execution checked by an expert. Those who intend to carry on this practice should do so with a due sense of sacredness and awareness of the wealth it can bring to their life. Although you should have the right and the duty to control your own destiny, securing expert counsel or guidance is indispensable.

When you go to an expert, please advise them of physical problems, such as high blood pressure, lung problems, or signs of hyperventilation …. If you have a particular physical problem or handicap, an expert can lead you through a very mild form of Kriya Pranayama and the corresponding Mudras – and if necessary, may recommend that you practice them only mentally. [1]

[1] To check if refinements have been added to the description of the techniques, visit www.kriyayogainfo.net at least once a year.

CHAPTER 6

BASIC TECHNIQUES OF KRIYA YOGA

[I] *Location of the Chakras and position for meditation*
[II] *Techniques to prepare Kriya Pranayama: Maha Mudra and Navi Kriya*
[III] *Central technique: Kriya Pranayama*
[IV] *How to conclude a Kriya Yoga routine: Mental Pranayama*

[I] Location of the Chakras and position for meditation

[I.1] Location of the Chakras

The *Chakras* are subtle astral (ethereal) organs inside the spinal cord; ideal steps on a mystic ladder guiding one safely to the deepest ecstatic experience. In *Kriya Yoga* it is not as much important to visualize a *Chakra* with petals, with a *Bija Mantra* in its center, with a *Yantra*... and with all you can find in New Age books, as to perceive approximately its location. The practice of *Kriya Yoga* refines this perception.

When certain particular conditions are established – mental silence, relaxation, an intense aspiration of the soul – the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* takes, so to say, the "inward route" and the Spiritual Reality manifests. You will then perceive, in the astral dimension, the reality of the *Chakras*. You will be able to listen to their astral vibration as well as hues of light pouring forth from their locations. The practice of *Kechari Mudra* (explained in chapter 7) fosters this experience, especially when the "wind" of the breath subsides.

The nature of each *Chakra* reveals two aspects, one internal and one external. The internal aspect of a *Chakra*, its essence, is a vibration of "light" attracting your awareness upward, toward the Spirit. The external aspect of a *Chakra*, its physical side, is a diffuse "light" enlivening and sustaining the life of the physical body.

Now, while climbing the ladder of the spine during *Kriya Pranayama,* you can conceive the *Chakras* as tiny "twinkling lights" illuminating a hollow

tube which is the spinal cord. Then, when the awareness is brought down, the *Chakras* are internally perceived as organs distributing energy (coming from the Infinity above) into the body, enlivening the part of the body which is in front of them.

The first *Chakra*, ***Muladhara***, is at the base of the spinal column just above the coccygeal (tailbone) region. The second *Chakra*, ***Swadhisthana***, is in the sacral region, halfway between *Muladhara* and *Manipura*. The third *Chakra*, ***Manipura***, is in the lumbar region, at the same level as the navel. The fourth *Chakra*, ***Anahata***, (more simply called heart *Chakra*) is in the dorsal region; its location can be felt by bringing the shoulder blades closer and concentrating on the tense muscles in the area between them or just below them. The fifth *Chakra*, ***Vishuddha***, is located where the neck joins the shoulders. Its location can be detected by swaying the head from side to side, keeping the upper chest immobile, and concentrating on the point where you perceive a "cracking" sound.

The sixth *Chakra* is called ***Ajna***. *Medulla oblongata* and *Bhrumadhya* (the point between the eyebrows) are strictly related to *Ajna* and can not be considered as separated entities. *Medulla* is considered the physical counter part of *Ajna Chakra*. What matters is that by finding stability of concentration in any of the three points, the spiritual eye (*Kutastha*), a luminous point in the middle of an infinite spherical radiance, appears at the interior vision. This experience is the royal entrance to the spiritual dimension. Sometimes the term *Kutastha* is utilized at the place of *Bhrumadhya*.

In order to locate ***Medulla,*** at the top of the spine, raise your chin and tense the muscles of the neck at the base of the occipital bone; then concentrate on the small hollow under that bone. *Medulla* is just anterior to that hollow.

Moving from the seat of *Medulla* toward the point between the eyebrows, it is not difficult to locate the seat of ***Ajna:*** swing slowly your head sideways (a few centimeters left and right) having the sensation of something connecting the two temples. The seat of *Ajna Chakra* is the intersecting point of two lines: the line connecting the seat of *Medulla* with the point between the eyebrows and the line connecting the two temples.

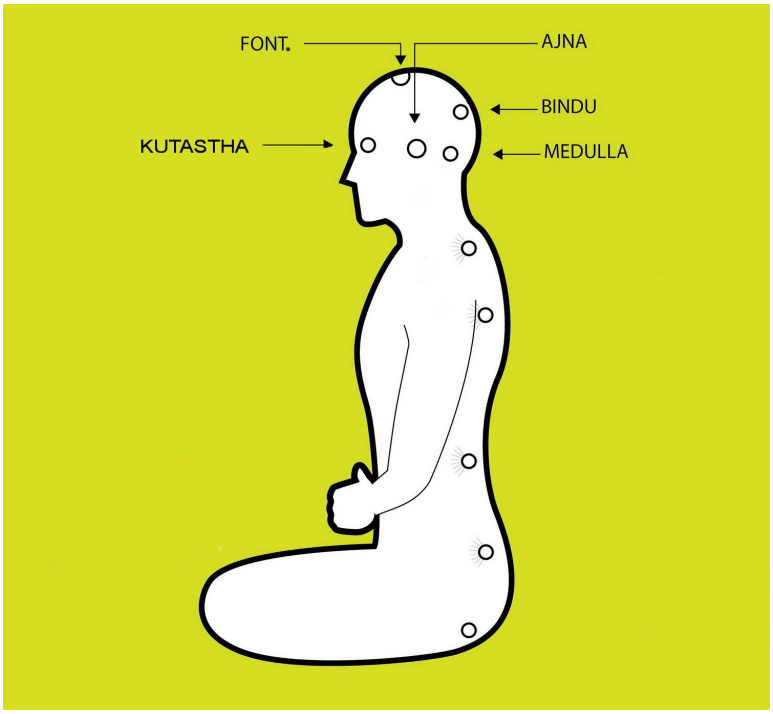


Figure 1. Location of the Chakras

The energy flowing through the tip of the tongue during *Kechari Mudra* stimulates the **pituitary gland**. The pituitary gland, or hypophysis, is an endocrine gland about the size of a pea. It forms a protrusion at the bottom of the brain hypothalamus. It is worthwhile clarifying this because a famous *Kriya* school counsels to focus on this gland in order to obtain the experience of the spiritual eye. The same school emphasizes the role of the **pineal gland**. This is another small endocrine gland in the brain. It is shaped like a tiny pine cone (symbolically, many spiritual organizations, have used the pine cone as an icon). It is located behind the pituitary gland, at the back of the third ventricle of the brain. Having full experience of the white spiritual Light after long concentration upon the pineal gland it is considered the last action that you do to perfect you meditation before being lost in *Samadhi*.

In the commentary on the Bhagavad Gita by Swami Pranabananda Giri there is a hint to two further spiritual centers in the brain: ***Roudri*** and ***Bama***. *Roudri* is located on the left side of the brain above the left ear, while *Bama* is located on the right side of the brain above the right ear. We shall have the opportunity to utilize them during the practice of those *Higher Kriyas* that happen in the upper part of the brain.

Bindu is located in the occipital region and is not considered a *Chakra* in itself. However it is a very important spiritual center because it works as a door leading the awareness to ***Sahasrara*** – the seventh *Chakra* located at the top of the head. *Bindu* is located where the hairline twists in a kind of

vortex (This is the *Sikha* point where the *Hindus* leave a lock of hair after having shaved their head.)

In order to become aware of *Sahasrara* some schools counsel to focus on ***Fontanelle*** (the anterior fontanelle more properly called "Bregma".)

The **eighth *Chakra*** is the highest center we are going to consider. It is located at about 30 centimeters above *Fontanelle*.

[I.2] Position for Meditation

One should sit facing east. According to Patanjali, the *yogi*'s posture (Asana) must be steady and pleasant.

***Half-lotus*:** Most *kriyabans* are relaxed in this sitting position, which has been used since time immemorial for meditation, because it's comfortable and easily managed. The key is to maintain an erect spine by sitting on the edge of a thick cushion so the buttocks are slightly raised. Sit cross-legged with the knees resting on the floor. Bring the left foot toward the body so its sole is resting against the inside of the right thigh. Draw the heel of the left foot in toward the groin as much as possible. The right leg is bent at the knee and the right foot is comfortably placed over the left thigh or calf or both. Let the right knee drop as far as possible toward the floor. The shoulders are in a natural position. The head, neck, chest, and spine are in a straight line as if they were linked. When the legs get tired, reverse them to prolong the position.

The best hand position is with fingers interlocked as in the well-known photo of Lahiri Mahasaya. This balances the energy from the right hand to the left and vice versa. The hand position for meditation and for *Pranayama* is the same because you move from *Pranayama* to meditation without interruption. Usually you don't even realize it.

For certain health or physical conditions, it may be beneficial to practice the half lotus on an armless chair provided it is large enough. In this way, one leg at a time can be lowered and the knee joint relaxed!

***Siddhasana*:** (Perfect Pose) is of medium difficulty. The sole of the left foot is placed against the right thigh while the heel presses on the perineum. The right heel is against the pubic bone. This leg position combined with *Kechari Mudra* closes the pranic circuit and makes *Kriya Pranayama* easy and beneficial. It is said the position helps one to become aware of the movement of *Prana*.

***Padmasana*:** (lotus position) a difficult, uncomfortable position; the right foot is placed on the left thigh and the left foot on the right thigh with the soles of the feet turned up. It is explained that when this *Asana* is combined

with *Kechari* and *Shambhavi Mudra*, it results in an energetic condition that produces the experience of the internal light coming from each *Chakra*. It helps keep the body from bending or falling over as it tends to do when deep *Pratyahara* is practiced. *Padmasana* is uncomfortable for a beginner because the knees and the ankles become extremely painful. I would not advise anyone to perform this difficult posture; some *yogis* have had to have knee cartilage removed after years of forcing themselves into the *Padmasana*.

[II] Techniques to prepare Kriya Pranayama: Maha Mudra and Navi Kriya

[II.1] Maha Mudra

Use a carpet placed on the pavement to practice the following procedure. Bend the left leg under the body so the left heel is as near as possible to the perineum; the right leg is fully extended in front.

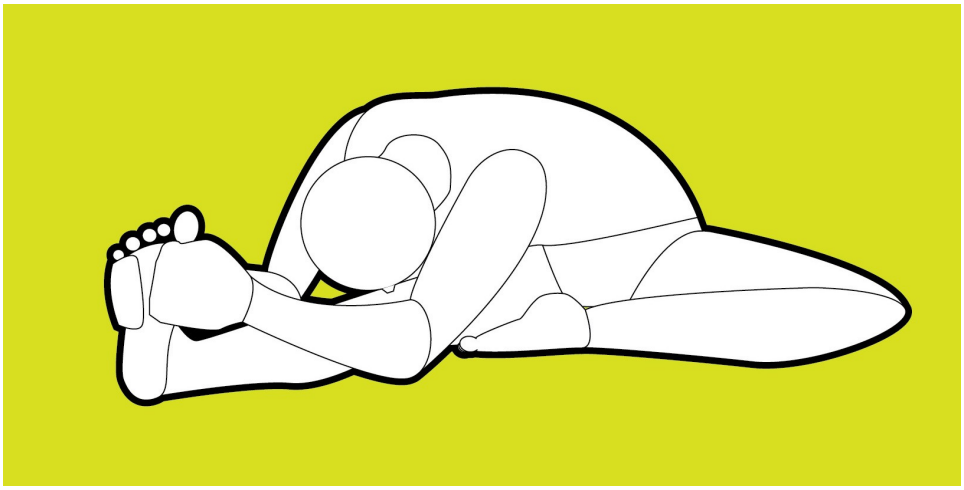


Figure 2. Maha Mudra

Inhale deeply, feel the energy coming up in the head. Hold the breath, stretch forward (in a relaxed way) so that you can grasp the toes of your right foot with both hands and gently pull them backwards. In this outstretched position, the chin is pressed naturally against the chest. Continue holding the breath and mentally chant *Om* in the region between the eyebrows 6-12 times. You can contract the anal and the abdominal muscles and draw the abdominal muscles in slightly so the navel moves inward toward the lumbar center. While holding the breath, return to the starting position and with a long exhalation, visualize sending the warm energy down to the base of the spinal column.

This *Mudra* must be comfortable and it must not hurt! Initially, most *kriyabans* will not be able to do the forward stretch without risking back or knee injury. To avoid pain or injury, you can keep the outstretched leg bent at the knee until the position feels comfortable! Repeat the procedure with the leg positions reversed and finally repeat the procedure with both legs outstretched. This is one *Maha Mudra*; it requires about 60-80 seconds. *Maha Mudra* is to be practiced three times.

[II.2] Navi Kriya

Visualize a tiny cord that comes out from the point between the eyebrows bends slightly and goes down to the navel. When it comes natural to have a an inhalation, inhale, visualize the movement of air rising, through the visualized duct, from the navel to the point between the eyebrows, pause an instant there just chant *Om* mentally. When it comes natural to exhale, exhale, visualizing the movement of air going down into the navel, pause and chant *Om* mentally in the navel. By repeating this, you will markedly feel that your breath begins to subside and disappear. When this happens, go on mentally chanting the *Om Mantra* in alternation between the point between the eyebrows and the navel and moving the focus of your awareness between these two points, without ceasing being aware of the channel connecting the two centers. Carry on.

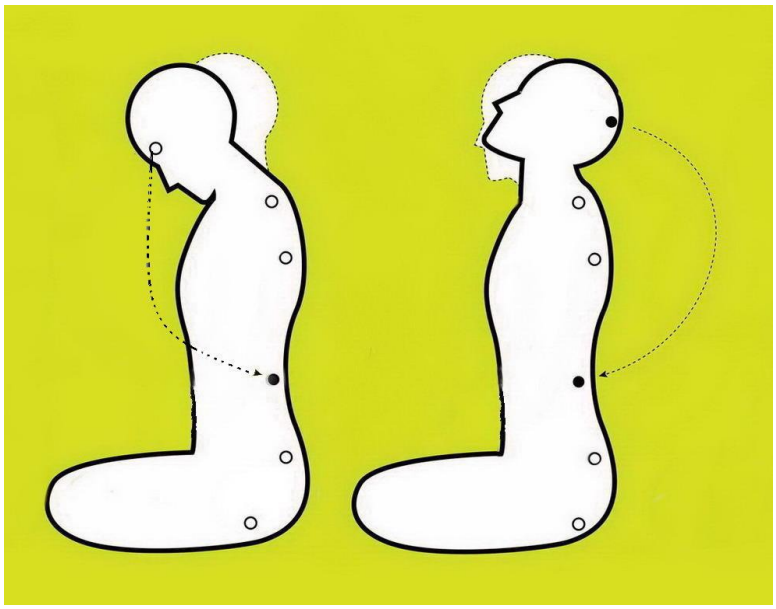


Figure 3. Simple form of Navi Kriya

When *Om* is chanted about 100 times, bend your head backwards and repeat a similar procedure by chanting *Om* in alternation between the *Bindu* and the third *Chakra.* Visualize another cord that connects (outside your body) the *Bindu* to the third *Chakra*. Let your breath – if there is still a trace of breath – flow freely through that cord. When *Om* is chanted about 25 times, resume the chin's normal position. This is one *Navi*

Kriya. The optimum is to have 4 cycles of *Navi Kriya*.

Variation
Rest the chin on the throat cavity. *Om* is chanted 100 – aloud or mentally – times in the navel region. The chin is then raised as much as possible and *Om* is chanted approximately 25 times in the third *Chakra Manipura*. In this exercise forget the breath. Let your breath be natural.
This is one *Navi Kriya*. Practice four *Navi Kriyas*.

In this exercise, if you like, the hands can be involved. With the fingers interlocked, palms face downward, pads of both thumbs touching, the thumbs lightly press the navel for each *Om*. When the chin is then raised the hands are kept behind the back and joined by interlocking the fingers with the palms facing upward. For every *Om*, the thumbs apply a light pressure to the lumbar vertebrae. This technique is repeated four times.

[III] Central technique: Kriya Pranayama
Let us first explain what abdominal breathing is. In abdominal breathing, during inhalation the upper part of the thorax remains almost immobile while the abdomen expands. Shoulders are not raised. During exhalation, the abdomen comes inside.

Have a deep breath, then another: don't worry about the length of inhalation and of exhalation. (After some breaths you discover that your breath lengthens naturally.) Merge your awareness with the beauty of this deep breathing.

Kechari Mudra means inserting the tongue in the nasal pharynx. [In the next Chapter we shall introduce a method (*Talabya Kriya*) to achieve *Kechari Mudra*.] Practice *Kechari Mudra* if you are able, otherwise practice "*baby Kechari*" – touch with the tip of the tongue the upper palate at the point where the hard palate becomes soft. This easy-to-achieve position of the tongue is enough to make the mind completely still.

Let us now start the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. Assume your favorite meditation position. Sit facing East. From now onwards you can utilize the trick described previously sitting on the edge of a thick cushion so the buttocks are slightly raised.

The chin is little down, near the chest (your neck muscles maintain an even slight tension.) Your fingers are interlocked like in the well-known photo of Lahiri Mahasaya. Mouth and eyes are closed. Feel that the center of your awareness is located at *Medulla* while the inner gaze converge effortlessly on *Kutastha*.

Inhale deeply through the nose producing an unvoiced sound in the

throat (like in *Ujjayi Pranayama*). [2] To make certain the sound is correct, concentrate only on increasing the friction of the air flowing through your throat. A muffled sound will originate. Increase its frequency. If the surroundings are perfectly still, a person could hear it within a 4-5 meter radius – by no means outside it. We shall learn that this sound acts like a hydraulic pump to raise the energy (*Prana*) from the base of the spinal column up to the *Medulla.*

During inhalation, *Om* is mentally chanted (or, more simply, "mentally placed") in each one of the six *Chakras* from *Muladhara* to *Medulla.* During exhalation, *Om* is mentally chanted in the *Medulla* and in all the other *Chakras* coming down to *Muladhara.* From this moment onwards start to count the number of breaths utilizing a *Mala* or the fingers. To start, you will practice 24 breaths. In time you will increase by 12.

Don't lose the focus of your inner gaze on *Kutastha*. It is clear that going up and down the spine producing the throat sound and at the same time placing *Om* in each *Chakra* is difficult. However, Lahiri Mahasaya wrote that going ahead without chanting *Om* in each Chakra, your *Kriya* becomes "tamasic" [of negative nature] and many kinds of useless thoughts arise. Therefore try to calm yourself and get this result.

After some days or weeks of regular practice, during inhalation, you will perceive a cold current coming up through the spine – or simply a diffused fresh sensation. During exhalation you will perceive a lukewarm sensation in the spine. Exhalation could be longer than inhalation. During the last part of the exhalation, there is a clear perception of the navel moving in toward the spine. By refining this experience – being more aware of the navel moving inward and of the action of the diaphragm muscles – you will feel an increasing joy sensation.

Go ahead in this way without expecting more. Try to practice always in a joyful mood. Enjoy the sounds in the throat, the sensations, and also the short pauses between inhalation and exhalation and between exhalation and inhalation. The pauses do no last more than 2-3 seconds. Each pause is a moment of comfortable peace.

Reference literature says that perfect *Kriya Pranayama* is 80 breaths per

[2] The sound of inhalation is similar to the amplified background noise of a loudspeaker – a quiet *schhhh*… /ʃ/. There is only a slight hiss during exhalation. The perfection of the sound will be reached through *Kechari Mudra* proper. The sound of inhalation will be very subtle, while the exhaling sound will be flute-like: *Sheee Sheee* [ʃi:].

hour – about 45 seconds per breath. A beginner is far away from reaching such rhythm. For a beginner if each breath lasts 20 seconds, this means that the practice is very good.

IMPORTANT NOTE
This description of *Kriya Pranayama* corresponds to what is given by different teachers that maintain they are teaching Lahiri Mahasaya's *Original Kriya*. [We do not consider here the *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by those organizations that bring forth PY's teachings.] What we have explained up to this moment, is often improved by personal counsel. In the next chapter I will describe very important details. The point I want to share with you now is this: read everything but study deeply the *Kriya Pranayama* as explained in chapter 8.

[IV] How to conclude a Kriya Yoga routine: Mental Pranayama
After three deep breaths, let your breath be natural and forget it. Move your awareness up and down the spine pausing in each spinal center. Start with the first, pause there, move to the second, pause....and so on. After ascending to the *Medulla*, begin the descent, pausing in the fifth *Chakra*, fourth *Chakra,* and so on. It is convenient to center your attention for 10-20 seconds on each *Chakra*. (*Om* may be mentally chanted in each *Chakra* but it is better not to disturb the mental silence.)

The secret lies in maintaining the awareness in each of them until a sensation of sweetness is felt, as if the *Chakra* were "melting".

The process of rising and descending through the *Chakras* is carried on as long as it is comfortable. (One complete round lasts about 2-4 minutes.) This is the most pleasing part of the routine. It is not a technique like the others, but a soothing relaxation.

During the practice of *Mental Pranayama*, a deep silence settles in the consciousness and in the body. Tranquility, "*Sthir Tattwa*" (calm, static *Prana*) is experienced in the seventh *Chakra*. Lahiri Mahasaya called this state *Paravastha* or *Kriyar Paravastha* - "the state that comes after the action of *Kriya*". In this state you know the formless joy, you feel vast and free as the sky. The breath calms down and the mind becomes empty, silent. Remain like this 10-20 minutes.

CHAPTER 7

INTENSIFYING THE PRACTICE OF KRIYA PRANAYAMA

[I] *Intensifying the practice of Maha Mudra and of Navi Kriya*
[II] *Intensifying the practice of Kriya Pranayama*
[III] *Reflexions upon mental Pranayama*
[IV] *A great effort for those who are willing to do it: achieving Kechari Mudra proper.*
[V] *Incremental routine with two key examples*
[VI] *Yoni Mudra*

This chapter is for those students who have shown a passionate commitment to the practice of *Kriya Yoga*. The right moment to study it is 6-12 months after practicing *Kriya* daily, when the coarseness of the breathing process has decreased. In my opinion what is essential is the genuine longing to deepen the meditation experience.

[I] Intensifying the practice of Maha Mudra and of Navi Kriya

[I.1] Intensifying the practice of Maha Mudra

What I am explaining now comes from the school of Swami Hariharananda. This school does not explain everything (*Kechari Mudra* proper, *Navi Kriya*, *Thokar with Kumbhaka*.... are not given) but *Maha Mudra* is given with unsurpassed care, making *Omkar* realization almost tangible even to a beginner. This *Maha Mudra* is divided into two parts.

Forward bendings

Sit on the pavement in the half-lotus position or on the heels. Exhale. Concentrate on *Ajna* in the center of your head. Through a deep inhalation (not necessarily as long as in *Kriya Pranayama*) visualize the breath coming from the physical location of *Muladhara* up the spine until you complete the breath at *Ajna*. Hold your breath. Bend at the waist and preferably touch the floor with your head. (The head is placed in the region between the knees. Use your hands freely in order to achieve this position comfortably.)

Gently breathe out and let the breath free. After touching the forehead to the floor, twist first to the right, nearing the right earlobe to the right knee. The head comes near the right knee, the face is turned toward

the left knee so that it is possible to perceive a pressure on the right side of the head; a sensation of space is perceived inside the left side of the brain. Remain in this position for 3 to 30 seconds. Move head back to center until forehead touches ground. Then repeat the same exercise with the other side of your body, reversing the perceptions. Move your head until your left ear is directly over the left knee. Try to experience internal pressure in the left-side of your head; a sensation of space is perceived inside the right side of the brain. Remain in this position for 3 to 30 seconds. Then the head is placed in the region between the knees again, the face turned downward. A pressure is felt on the forehead. A sensation of space is perceived inside the occipital region.

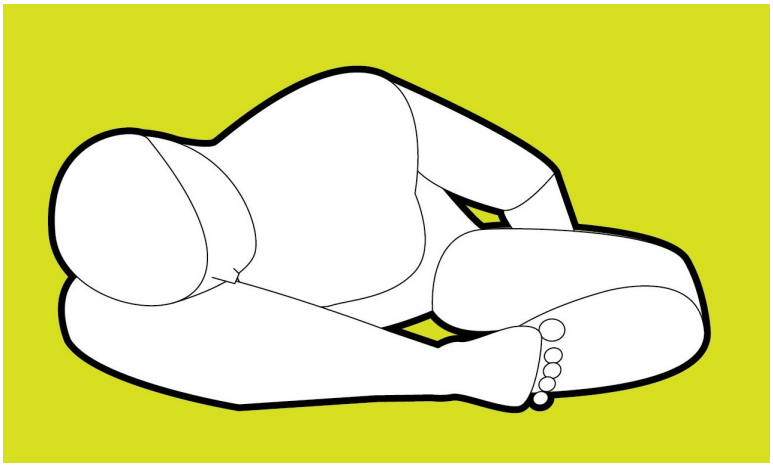


Figure 4. Forward bent. First position

During this delicate process you are breathing normally and your awareness is mainly at *Ajna* while your eyes are focused on *Kutastha*. Then sit up straight, inhaling deeply. Through a long exhalation let the energy go down from *Ajna* to *Muladhara*. Through a deep inhalation visualize the breath coming from the physical location of *Swadhisthana* up the spine until you complete the breath at *Ajna*. Repeat all the previous process just as we have done for *Muladhara*. At the end through a long exhalation you guide the energy from *Ajna* to *Swadhisthana*. Then repeat the same process for *Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha* and *Medulla*. In this way you will enjoy six bows.

NOTE
To increase the power of this procedure, you can hold your breath when you are down. You will get a very strong sensation of energy rising up and intensifying in the point between your eyebrows. Breath retention is a powerful *Kundalini* stimulator. If you are not ready for the power generated by this procedure, if you feel like "spaced out" after your meditation or if you feel too much irritable, don't hold your breath.

When you bend your body left, your right nostril will open. When you bend your body right, your left nostril will open. When you bend your body in the front, you get equal pressure of flow of breath inside your nostrils. You get balance of the mind and calmness in your body. Your spinal chord passage will open.

The lunar channel of *Ida* is situated at the left side of the spine; the solar channel of *Pingala* is situated at the right side of the spine. Both chords cling to each other. By repeating the previous procedure, they are separated and, as a consequence, an hollow passage is opened between the two. The opening of the spiritual passage within the spine (*Sushumna*) is the starting point of the practice of meditation.

Maha Mudra

Bend the left leg under the body so the left heel is near to the perineum. Draw the right knee against the body so the thigh is as close to the chest as possible. The interlocked fingers are placed just below knee applying pressure to your internal organs. Take 5 to 6 very deep breaths with moderate pressure applied to knee. Then inhale deep and hold, extend the right leg, bow down, breath normally and massage the right leg from the foot to the thigh and hip. Then grasp the right foot in this way: the right hand grabs the right toes while the left hand grabs the inner side of the middle part of the right foot (the arch of the foot). The face is turned to the left. You perceive a sensation like an inner pressure on the right side of the head. It contrasts with the free space sensation in the left side of the brain. Chant *Om* six times in the point between your eyebrows. Then inhale and hold, sit back up onto your left foot with right knee folded into your chest, then exhale into normal conscious breathing.

Practice the whole procedure by reversing the perceptions and the position of the legs. I won't repeat everything – don't forget the chant of *Om* six times in the point between your eyebrows.

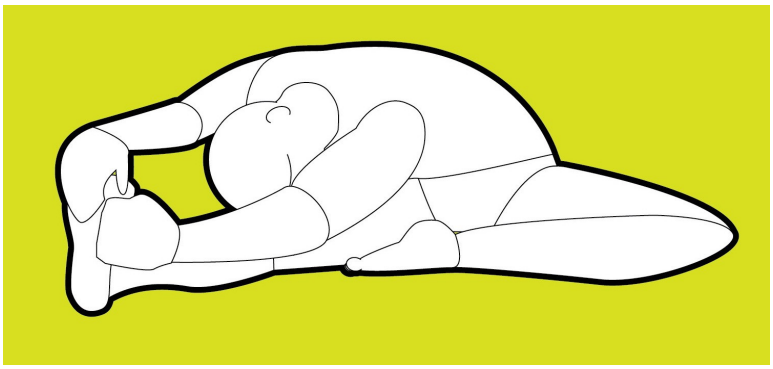


Figure 5. Here the face is turned to the left

Now, draw both knees against your body. Extend both legs, bow down, breath normally and massage both legs from feet to thighs and hips. Then

grasp both feet: right hand to right toes, left hand to left toes. Breathe normally, flex feet 4 or 5 times then relax with the head down as near to knees as possible. Experience internal pressure on the front part of the head. A sensation of space is perceived inside the occipital region. Chant *Om* six times in the point between your eyebrows. Then inhale and hold, sit up and massage toes, then fold legs back to chest and exhale. As usual, this exercise is repeated three times.

NOTE

The most serious schools of *Kriya* recommend that for every 12 *Kriya Pranayama*, one should perform one *Maha Mudra* – three remains the minimum number. (To make it clear, those who practice 60 *Kriya Pranayamas* should perform *Maha Mudra* five times, while those who practice 12 or 24 *Pranayamas* should perform it three times.) Unfortunately, having listened to different *kriyabans*, I dare say it would be a miracle if *kriyabans* regularly practiced even the three required repetitions. Others believe they are practicing *Kriya* correctly without ever practicing one single *Maha Mudra*! There is no doubt that if you regularly skip this technique and lead a sedentary life, the spinal column will lose its elasticity. One's physical condition deteriorates over the years and it becomes almost impossible to maintain the correct meditation position for more than a few minutes – that is why *Maha Mudra* is so important for *kriyabans*.

Maha Mudra incorporates all the three *Bandhas*. When applied simultaneously with the body bent forward and without excessive contraction, it helps one to be aware of both ends of *Sushumna* and produces the feeling of an energetic current moving up the spine. In due course, one will be able to perceive the whole *Sushumna* as a radiant channel. There are reports of *yogis* having achieved fantastic experiences using only this technique. According to their accounts, the perception of *Sushumna* has increased tremendously. There are *kriyabans* who have set aside all the other *Kriya* techniques and practiced 144 *Maha Mudra* in two sessions daily. They consider *Maha Mudra* the most useful among all *Kriya Yoga* techniques.

I have noticed that some schools insist on uninfluential details. For example they insist that when you extend the right leg in front, you must bend the left leg under the body so the left heel is as near as possible to the perineum. Then the left heel exerts pressure on the perineum. This pressure is of course a means of stimulating one's awareness of the *Muladhara Chakra* in the coccyx region at the root of the spine. [Of course when you extend the left leg, it is the right heel to create pressure.]

Another example is when some schools suggest drawing the knee (or both knees, before the third movement) against the body so the thigh is as close to the chest as possible during inhalation. They recommend that the interlocked fingers are placed around the knee to exert pressure on it. The say that this helps to keep the back straight and make the inner sound of the *Anahata Chakra* audible.

A third detail is this. As we have seen, in the outstretched position, the big toe is grasped with firmness. Some schools insist on this detail: the toenail of the

right (left) big toe is squeezed with the thumb of the right (left) hand; the index and middle fingers are behind it. The left (right) hand cups the sole of the foot. When the procedure is repeated with both legs outstretched, both toes are grasped with the interlocked hands.

[I.2] Intensify the practice of Navi Kriya

This variation envisages a remarkable work upon *Dantian.* [3] It rivets the attention in a way that no other variation is able to produce. Its smooth shifting of energy along the circumference of the head has a very good effect.

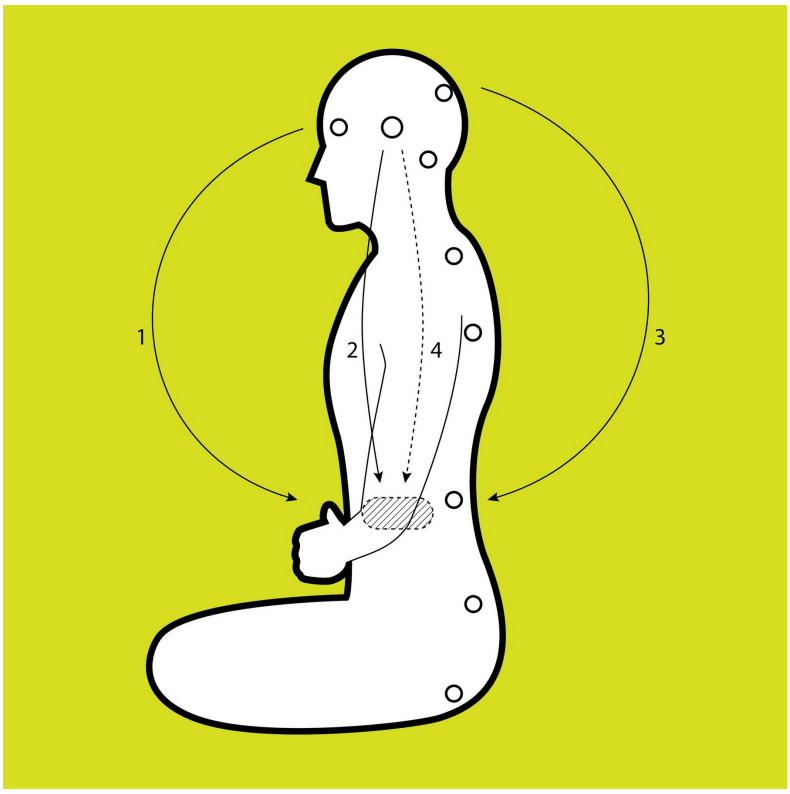


Figure 10. The energy enters the *Dantian* along four directions

The chin is brought down toward the throat cavity. You have a short inhalation (two seconds maximum, without concentrating on the *Chakras*) followed by a very long exhalation during which the energy is felt descending from the frontal part of the brain, along a path outside the body to the navel, reaching through it the *Dantian* region.

During this long exhalation, *Om* is chanted mentally, rapidly, 10-15 times, accompanying the descent of energy throughout the path. After a short pause in the *Dantian*, the head resumes its normal position.

Now each detail is repeated but the descent of the energy happens through a different path. A short inhalation draws the energy into the head

[3] The *Dantian* can be visualized as a ball about one and one-half inches in diameter. Its center is located about one and one-half inches below the belly button and about two and one-half inches inside.

again. The head bends but not in the front: it bends toward the *left* shoulder, without turning the face. A long exhalation (with the same chanting of *Om, Om, Om…*) accompanies the downward movement of energy which starts from the brain's left side and moves along a path outside the body at its left side (as if shoulder or arm would not exist). The energy comes down to the waist, cross it and moves toward the *Dantian*.

The head moves back into its normal position. After a short inhalation, the head bends backwards. A long expiration (with the same chanting of *Om, Om, Om…*) accompanies the downward movement of energy which starts from the occipital region and moves (outside the body) down to the waist where it bends, pierces the third *Chakra Manipura* and moves toward the inside of the abdominal region (*Dantian*). The procedure is repeated likewise on the *right* side.

The last exhalation concludes a mini cycle of four exhalations accompanied by four descents of energy towards the waist and, crossing it, towards the region of low abdomen. This mini cycle is repeated 9 times. In conclusion we have had 4x9 = 36 descents of energy. What we have described lasts 8-10 minutes and is equivalent to 4 repetitions of the basic form of *Navi Kriya*.

As the practitioner proceeds with the rotations and the effects of the technique become more and more perceptible, the movements of the head become less marked – the process internalizes. One phenomenon is remarkable: at the very moment the order to exhale has been imparted by the mind, it feels as if the lungs cannot move. Some instants later comes the awareness of something subtle descending into the body. A new kind of exhalation is enjoyed, like an internal all-pervading pressure. It brings about a peculiar feeling of well-being, harmony, and freedom. One has the impression one could remain like that forever. Logic implies that breath is coming out of the nose, yet you would swear it doesn't. This may be considered the first experience of *Pranayama with internal breath* (also called *Kriya of the cells*) that we are going to discuss in Appendix 6.

[II] Intensifying the practice of Kriya Pranayama

[II.1] Sound as a "flute" of the exhalation

During *Kriya Pranayama* with *Kechari Mudra* [up to this point we have describe only the "*baby*" *Kechari Mudra*, in a few lines you will find the explanation of *Kechari Mudra* proper] the exhalation arising in the nasal

pharynx has a fine sound like a faint whistle. Some say "flute-like", Lahiri Mahasaya in his diaries, refers to it as "*Shee*, *Shee*." [4]

This sound is produced in the upper part of our nasal pharynx. The sensation is that it originates behind *Kutastha*. If you feel like this, you have only one duty: to relax more, letting that the sweet practice of *Kriya Pranayama* absorbs you completely. Some schools call it the *Shakti Mantra*. It has been likened to the "flute of Krishna". Lahiri Mahasaya described it as "similar to blowing air through a keyhole". He described it as "a razor which cuts off everything related to the mind". It has the power to cut out any external distracting factors including thoughts, and comes at the maximal point of relaxation. When distraction and anxiety arise, the sound vanishes.

Cultivating the perfection of this sound and concentrating firmly on it, means creating the best basis to arouse the true, the real *Om* sound.

I would like that you have clear one point: the sound like a "flute" is one thing, the sound of Om is another thing. The first favors the apparition of the second. The sound of Om (sometimes Om is written Omkar – it is the same concept) is like the sound of "running water". Lahiri Mahasaya described it as a sound "produced by a lot of people continually striking the disk of a bell and as continuous as oil flowing out of a container". Surely, when you hear the sound of running waters or of waves breaking over cliffs, you can be sure you are on the right track. A great experience is hearing a distant sound of a long-sustaining bell.

Kriya Yoga literature explains that when this event happens, the *Omkar* experience acquires the dynamism of *Kundalini;* the soul travels through the spinal cord and burns in the joy of *Samadhi*. Modesty is always welcome but when this result is achieved, the positive euphoria is so overwhelming that it cannot be contained (like finding Aladdin's magic lamp.) In *Kriya* literature, it is said that those who realize a perfect *Pranayama,* can achieve everything through it. Well, if we dream of a faultless *Kriya Pranayama*, then what we have described matches the ideal of perfection.

[4] In order to have an idea of it, take a whistle, blow, diminish, diminish …. until it is barely audible. Consider an empty perfume sample, without cap. Close one nostril. Put the opening of the sample under the open nostril and have a long but subtle exhalation. Move up and down the sample experiencing all the variations of the produced whistle sound. At a certain point you will obtain a fantastic whistle and say: "This is it"

During *Kriya Pranayama* the astral sounds that come from the *Chakras* appear and capture our attention. They have nothing to do with the sound produced by the air in the throat. They appear in different forms (bumblebee, flute, harp, drum, hum like an electrical transformer, bell....) and capture a *kriyaban*'s awareness leading it to greater depths without any danger of distractions.

You need a continuous will to listen internally. Each chanting of the syllable *Om* should be accompanied by an unswerving will to track down the echo of this vibration until you become aware of the astral sounds. Your listening skills will improve.

A very important fact to understand is that the event of perceiving those sounds is not produced by the intensity of a unique moment of deep concentration but by the accumulation of effort manifested during daily sessions of *Kriya* (effort is the meticulous attention to any internal sound, no matter how faint).

Those who are not able to hear any internal sound should not conclude something is wrong. Maybe they have done an enormous effort whose fruits will be enjoyed during the next day's practice or some day in the future. A sign one is heading in the right direction is a sense of mild pressure, like a sensation of liquid peace above or around the head often accompanied by a certain humming in the entire occipital region.

If you perceive it, it serves no purpose wondering if this is the real *Om* because it is probably just a signal that the real experience is approaching. Just intensify your awareness of that region, especially its right part. Patience and constancy are of prime importance.

[II.2] Experience of the Dantian

We have said that focusing the awareness inside the *Dantian* is something fantastic that creates an experience of bliss during *Kriya Pranayama*!
Therefore, during the practice of the *Kriya Pranayama*, when you are well relaxed and the breath is subtle, try, during the exhalation, when the descending current comes near the lower *Chakras*, to become aware of the *Dantian*. This is the second point to care if you want to intensify your practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. Add this carefulness to the first point (sound of the "flute") and you will have an excellent *Pranayama*.

[III] Reflections upon mental Pranayama

Some people lament they get nowhere with *mental Pranayama*. If you verify the reason of such despondency, you realize that they have not understood the meaning of this technique. They keep on exerting a mental and even physical pressure on each *Chakra,* unable to relax and catch the sweetness that emanates from them. They complicate the teaching with various details (which could be useful in other techniques but not in the present one – contracting the muscles near each *Chakra,* utilize intense visualizations and bija mantras....) – and all the sweetness is dispelled.

During *mental Pranayama*, it is important you assume a passive attitude and patient as well, with total reliance on what will be revealed. When your awareness stays for some seconds in a *Chakra*, there comes the perception of a pleasurable sweet sensation and your breath slows down noticeably. Some inner sounds as well as hues of light in the screen of *Kutastha* deepen your contact with the *Omkar* dimension.

Chakras are like knots that can be untied if "touched" by one's concentration. Besides a melting sensation, one may also perceive the subtle radiation of each *Chakra* in the body. Make sure that this does not become a technical detail to be applied through an excessive power of visualization. Make your experience a spontaneous realization that the *Chakras* are sustaining each part of the body's vitality. This leads to the breathless state. Along the Kriya path, the "breathless state" is a concept you will often find, therefore let us try to clarify it now.

Mental Pranayama has a divine beauty. Without *mental Pranayama, Kriya Yoga* bears no fruit – sooner or later one unfailingly gives up *Kriya Yoga*, unless one is sustained by the excitement and expectations created in him by a heavy process of indoctrination.

A *Kriya* routine that does not end with *mental Pranayama* is like an orchestra going on stage, unpacking the instruments, tuning them and then leaving at once! It is this phase that brings everything together; the ripples in the mind's lake are stilled, the awareness becomes transparent: the mind is at rest and silent and gains the energy necessary to be more acutely alert. It is like a spiral which gradually and systematically takes care of all the levels of one's being: it is a healing process.

If the practice happens in the right spirit, then it gives birth to one of the rare moments in the day where you can utilize your meditation born intuition for effective handling any issue that arises from life. Inside the

perfect transparency of an inner order, all problems are solved. Therefore the value of *Mental Pranayama* becomes apparent when important decisions have to be taken. One is born to *Kriya* through the engaging practice of *mental Pranayama*: it projects us into sheer heaven and its beauty overflows our lives.

> ... it's hard to stay mad, when there's so much beauty in the world. Sometimes I feel like I'm seeing it all at once, and it's too much, my heart fills up like a balloon that's about to burst... And then I remember to relax, and stop trying to hold on to it, and then it flows through me like rain and I can't feel anything but gratitude for every single moment of my stupid little life. (From the movie American Beauty; 1999)

[IV] A great effort for those who are willing to do it: achieving Kechari Mudra proper

Kechari Mudra proper means inserting the tongue in the hollow of the nasal pharynx. Usually our tongue is normally unable to touch the uvula and, consequently, enter the nasal pharynx. Because of this, we are limited in our connection with the great reservoir of energy existing in the *Sahasrara* region. *Kechari Mudra* was conceived to overcome this obstacle. The practice of *Kriya Pranayama* with *Kechari Mudra* proper represents an enchanting experience, one of the best moments in the life of a *kriyaban*. *Kechari Mudra* makes a *kriyaban* able to make a gigantic footstep toward the perfection of *Kriya Pranayama*.

To get *Kechari Mudra* we practice *Talabya Kriya* which is described now.

[IV.1] Talabya Kriya

Start with the tongue in a relaxed position with the tip lightly touching the back of the upper teeth. Press the body of the tongue against the upper palate to create a suction cup effect. [Many practice *Talabya Kriya* incorrectly by instinctively turning their tongue backwards.]

When you have created the suction-cup effect, lower the bottom jaw until you clearly feel the stretch in the *lingual frenulum* (the small fold of tissue under the tongue that attaches it to the base of the mouth.) Release the tongue with a clicking sound then stick it out of the mouth and point it toward the chin. At the beginning, do not exceed 10 repetitions a day to avoid straining the *frenulum*. Eventually, you will do 50 repetitions in about 2 minutes (110-120 seconds.)

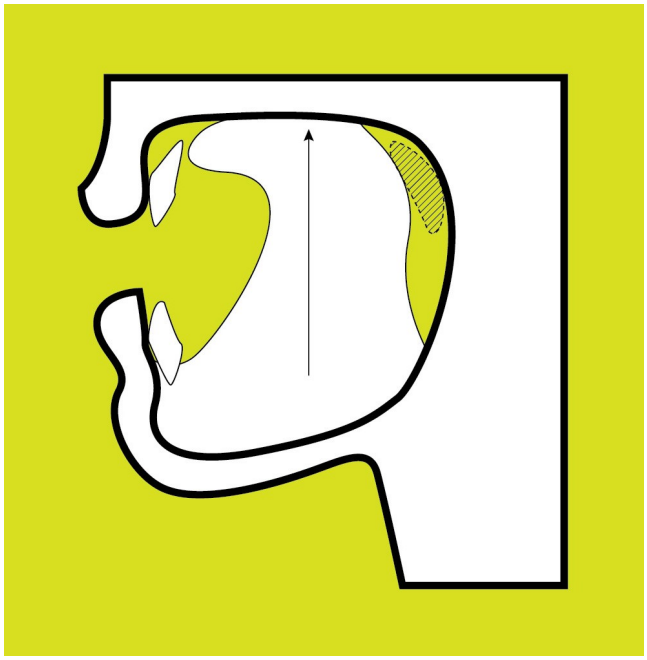


Figure 7. Key part of Talabya Kriya

I remark again that some do not understand immediately how to make their tongue adhere to the upper palate before opening the mouth and stretching the *frenulum*. Sometimes, even when they are shown in person, they are still not able to do it correctly. Here I can only emphasize that the main mistake is concentrating too much on where to place the tip of the tongue. The suction effect is obtained with the whole body of the tongue: the tip of the tongue has no role!

Note 1
In *Hatha Yoga* books there are different suggestions for lengthening the *frenulum*. One which is well known one is wrapping a piece of cloth around the tongue and, with the help of the hands, gently pulling (relaxing and repeating different times) the cloth both horizontally and also up, toward the tip of the nose. The technique of the *Talabya Kriya* can be enriched by massaging both the muscles of the tongue and the *frenulum* with one's own fingers. Lahiri Mahasaya was absolutely against cutting the *frenulum* to obtain faster and easier results.

Note 2
I hope that it is clear that *Talabya Kriya* and *Kechari Mudra* are completely different! Open your mouth in front of a mirror during the first part of *Talabya Kriya* to see the hollow parts on each side of the *frenulum* which appear isolated from the body of the tongue; during *Kechari Mudra,* it is the uvula that comes forward and only the root of the tongue is visible!

Note 3
Talabya Kriya is a technique that besides its utility to achieve *Kechari Mudra,* creates a perceivable relaxing effect on the thinking process. It should not be

considered a simple lingual frenulum stretching process. When the tongue sticks to the palate and the mouth is opened, in that instant the energetic split between our body and the reserve of static *Prana* located in the upper part of our head is momentarily healed. This introduces you, in the best of the ways, into the meditation state. Even after mastering *Kechari Mudra, Talabya Kriya* should continue to be practiced because it creates a perceivable relaxing effect on the thinking process. It is not known why stretching the *frenulum* reduces thought production, however, anyone practicing the technique can readily verify this.

Oddly enough, *Talabya Kriya* doesn't require concentrating on anything, it is purely physical. Just as an attempt to justify this, we can say that merely pressing the tongue against the upper palate and maintaining the suction effect on the palate for 10-15 seconds, can, in and of itself, generate sensitivity in the *Medulla* area in a very short time. The detail of extending the tongue plays an important part too. When the tongue is fully extended, it pulls on some cranial bones and leads to decompression of the whole area.

[IV.2] Steps towards Kechari Mudra proper

When you are sure to practice *Talabya Kriya* correctly, after several months of regular practice of it, try to attempt *Kechari Mudra*. The test is whether the tip of the tongue can touch the uvula. If so, then for a few minutes a day use the fingers to push the base of the tongue inward until the tip goes beyond the uvula and touches the pharynx behind it. Go ahead in this way for weeks.



Figure 8. Position of the tongue when you enter the nasal-pharynx

One day, the tip of the tongue will enter a centimeter or so into the nasal pharynx but slip out when the fingers are removed. But, after some more days, on removing the fingers, the tip of the tongue will remain "trapped" in that position. This happens because the soft palate (the part from which the uvula hangs) is soft, movable and acts like an elastic band and creates a hook. This prevents the tongue from slipping out and returning to its usual flat position. This is the turning point. By striving each day to practice at least 6-12 *Kriya Pranayama* with the tongue in this position – despite some discomfort such as an increase in salivation, swallowing, and occasional interruptions to reestablish the position – its practice becomes easy and comfortable. The sense of irritation and the increase in salivation are soon left behind.

After about three weeks of practicing in this way, you should be able to reach the same position without using the fingers. The tongue will be able to insert itself into the nasal-pharynx cavity. There will still be enough space left in the cavity to inhale and exhale through the nose.

[IV.3] What literature explains about Kechari Mudra

Kechari Mudra has a remarkable effect upon our psycho physical system: we notice a quieting of all useless, unwanted thoughts and intrusive mental processes. *Kechari Mudra* causes the life force to be withdrawn from thought processes. Bypassing the mind's energy system and changing both the path and the direction of *Prana* flow, *Kechari* connects our awareness with the Spiritual dimension whose seat is in the upper part of the brain. The internal chatter ceases; silence and transparency become the features of one’s consciousness. The mind works in a more restrained way and enjoys an essential rest; each thought becomes more concrete and precise. When, during the daily activities *Kechari Mudra* is practiced, moments of pure calmness and mental silence fill one’s entire being! Sometimes, mental silence turns into an explosion of inner joy. The only problem might be that during the first three weeks of *Kechari Mudra*, you experience "dizziness" and fogged up mental faculties. Be prepared for this eventuality and consider abstaining from driving and any work involving a significant proportion of risk during this time.

After several months of tireless practice, your tongue will reach the junction of the nasal passage inside the hole in the palate. The soft tissue above the holes in the internal part of the nostrils is alluded to in *Kriya* literature as the "uvula above the uvula". The tip of the tongue reaches this small area and remains "stuck" there comfortably.

According to *Kriya* literature, the tongue can be pushed even farther up. Any good anatomy book will reveal that the tongue cannot extend any farther when it fills up the nasal pharynx. That assertion should therefore be understood as a hint to what a normal person thinks is happening. Actually, by extending the tongue to its limit, it is possible to experience a great attraction toward the region between the eyebrows along with the sensation of having reached, with the tip of the tongue, a higher position.

Literature affirms that through *Kechari Mudra* we close a circuit between the fifth *Chakra* and the *Medulla*: *Amrit* (*"Nectar",* the elixir of life - a sweet tasting fluid) begins to trickle down through the tongue into the spine and then in the whole body. This brings about a rekindling of the vital force in the body. To have this experience, the tip of the tongue should touch three points in sequence: the uvula, a small asperity on the roof of the nasal pharynx under the pituitary gland, and the soft tissue above the nasal septum. The tip of the tongue should rotate on each of these spots for at least 20-30 seconds; then, in the manner of sipping a liquid or testing a food, an essence will be savored on the tongue's surface. The exercise should be repeated several times during the day. [5]

[IV.4] Kechari Mudra as condition to receive the Higher Kriyas

Kriya literature affirms that *Kechari Mudra* is decisive to receive initiation into the *Higher Kriyas.* There is nothing unusual that a *Kriya* teacher wants the student's mouth opened in front of them and see the tongue disappear into the nasal pharynx.

However great the effect of *Kechari Mudra*, I firmly believe it is important but not indispensable. The affirmation that I have often heard: "Until one is established in *Kechari Mudra*, one cannot achieve the state of Eternal Tranquility" is false! There are many who have practiced *Thokar* with enthusiasm and with admirable commitment, who have benefited from its remarkable effects but who have not realized this *Mudra*.

We cannot conceive that the achievement of *Kechari* creates a sharp division among people. Confined to a lower class are those poor little fellows who will never get the *Higher Kriyas* just because they don't succeed in realizing something physical that doesn't depend on their efforts but on their constitution. They will never succeed in speeding up their spiritual path like those *kriyabans* that nature has endowed with a longer

[5] I'm unable to comment on the importance of sipping the nectar since I haven't had the experience nor, I admit, have I even tried to have it. I'm sharing this information for the sake of accuracy and completeness. It may fascinate a *kriyaban* but after an initial period of intense excitement, it is forgotten.

bridle or with a nasal pharynx more accessible to the tip of the tongue... the whole idea is absurd.

Lahiri Mahasaya discovered the importance of connecting the tip of our tongue with the energy in the brain. Now, when just *baby Kechari* is practiced, we notice a quieting of all useless, unwanted thoughts and intrusive mental processes. It becomes easier to listen to astral sounds, and to merge with the *Omkar* aspect of the Divine.

P.Y.'s decision to allow initiation into the *Higher Kriyas* to those unable to practice *Kechari Mudra* should have our full praise. Considering Lahiri Mahasaya's attitude to partake of our imperfection and suffering, I believe he too behave similarly – although we don't know for certain

[V] Incremental routine with two key examples

In this chapter we want to discuss in general about the value of the *Incremental Routines* and give two more important examples that can help a *kriyaban* to best assimilate of the *First Level* of *Kriya*.

Let us start with a consideration: an unvarying routine that takes always the same amount of time is recommended by all the organizations. An unvarying schedule which consists of a daily practice of the same set of techniques, changing neither their order of practice nor the number of their repetitions, seems the best way of starting on the *Kriya* path. To start in this way is all right but going on in this way for the rest of one's life is inadmissible.

It is good to reflect upon Gopi Krishna' affirmation:

> ... the whole kingdom is the product of the activity of Prana and the atoms of matter both combined. […] Nothing would be more ridiculous to suppose that this combination of Prana and matter which resulted in such marvelous organizations of living creatures be so flimsy and unstable as to yield readily to the human will. The impression prevailing in the minds of some people that a few minutes' exercise of concentration can work miracles in changing one's existing level of consciousness [...] is, therefore, as correct as it would be suppose that repeated light hammer-blows dealt to a metal can lead to the release of atomic energy. An overhauling of the entire human body is necessary to effect a radical transformation of consciousness [...] <u>This is the reason why real success in *Yoga* is so very rare</u>. (Gopi Krishna *Kundalini: The Secret of Yoga*).

If, after a couple of years, of patient application of the same routine you would discover that your efforts had been totally ineffective and the initial enthusiasm got lost, you would receive from the "meditation counselors" the standard reprimand: "You depend too much on results. Be loyal and go

ahead with your practice." Perhaps he will tell you the story of that loyal *kriyaban* who had his first spiritual experience a day before dying!

Now, I never had doubts that one should continue the practice of *Kriya* through seemingly unproductive phases. This is what I did during grayish years.

Now and then I succeed in rekindling my enthusiasm by reading spiritual books, listening to taped spiritual talks, etc. Sooner or later the enthusiasm returned strong as before. But I have known a lot of *kriyabans* who left. They had reached a standstill where further progress appeared impossible. The idea of practicing *Kriya* daily during their entire life because of a promise made at the moment of initiation had become a nightmare, a cage from which they wanted to escape.

I am convinced that the practice of one or more *Incremental Routines* can avoid all this. It consists in utilizing only one technique, whose number of repetitions is gradually increased up to reach a large number of repetitions whose amount has been handed down from *Kriya* tradition. We are going to give soon an example that will clarify everything. We have witnessed unbelievable results in those who follow this counsel. The effect on one's personality is extremely positive – many inner obstacles disappear, the primitive enthusiasm for Kriya Yoga returns.

The incremental routine is practiced once in a week. If in the other days you do nothing, this is not a tragedy, nay, sometimes it is necessary, I would say healthy, to do this way. I will bring soon some examples that will clarify each detail of the practice.

Do not be offended by a comparison between *Kriya* and sports. *Kriya* is not a sport, but in the beginning stages of *Kriya*, while applying its different psycho-physical techniques, it has many points in common with the essence of athletics. Both shun the employment of brute force, and both require goals and the diligent channeling of one's strength to achieve them. Both also require analyzing and evaluating one's performance to learn from the experience. Now, what happens in athletics gives us a good example of how to progress. Athletes who wish to achieve excellent performance must somehow increase the intensity and the quality of their practice. Only through intensive training sessions where athletes push their physical and mental endurance beyond their normal levels, will they succeed in accomplishing otherwise unachievable levels of performance. [Each session should be followed by some days of rest in order to have a full recovery.] This is a "law" no one escapes.

We can conceive different *Incremental Routines*. Each technique practiced in intensive way, will arouse specific effects – perceived in particular the day following the practice. Some effects can sometimes rouse concern. I mean moods, fancies, memories and suddenly-arising desires …. They are a clue that a cleansing process is happening in one's subconscious mind. As for the spiritual progress, never entertain doubts that this practice is ineffective: the effects – spiritual revelations through intuitive discernment and temperamental transformations – can be indeed epochal.

To couple an *Incremental Routine* to be practiced once in a week, with the daily practice of a very simple *Kriya* routine seems to be the best solution. It embodies a balancing process which helps to cross safely each bad mood.

Naturally, a *kriyaban* must have familiarity with the fundamental laws of the human psyche and be able to identify a critical situation. Sometimes even an incremental routine should be put aside for a couple of months.

[V. 1] Incremental routine of Navi Kriya

Here is an example of the very words we can use to introduce a student to an easy but very important *Incremental Routine*, that of *Navi Kriya*.

"On Saturdays – or on any free day – after a short practice of *Talabya Kriya*, *Maha Mudra* and *Kriya Pranayama*, practice 8 sets of *Navi Kriya,* thus doubling the number of the usual 4 scheduled repetitions. As usual, complete your routine with *mental Pranayama*. The following day, you can take a break from all *Kriya* practices and you can give your mind the balm of a long, tranquil *Japa.* For the next few days, resume the original standard routine.

On the following Saturday, practice 3 times the normal number of *Navi Kriya*, i.e. 12 sets. Of course, this is always to be done within the framework of *Talabya, Maha Mudra*... finish with *mental Pranayama.* If possible take a long walk in the evening to calm the deep regions of your psyche. The following day rest by doing just *Japa* and go for a walk... After one week, or two if you wish, practice 16 sets of *Navi Kriya*.... and so on 20, 24...up to 80 sets, which is 20 times the original recommended number.

The increase of this delicate *Kriya* technique should be gradual. If you try to outsmart the process and perform too many repetitions all at once, nothing will come of it because the inner channels close up. Our inner obstacles cannot be removed in one day; our inner force is not strong enough to dissolve them. This internal power is initially weak and must be

enhanced week after week. Furthermore, this process should be incorporated within a regular active life.

It is up to you to make your practice days as pleasant as possible. It is advisable to break these long sessions into two parts – to be completed before going to bed. You can conclude each part by lying on your back (*Savasana:* the corpse pose) on a mat for a couple of minutes. You may complete the first part unhurriedly in the morning, carefully respecting every detail. In the afternoon, after a light meal and a little nap, it is fine to go out, find a pleasant place to sit, and then reserve some time to contemplate nature. Then you can complete the remaining prearranged number of repetitions, absorbed in your practice and perfectly at ease. You will see how the effects increase as daylight approaches twilight.

If you always practice in your room, arrange to have a tranquil walk in the evening. Everything will proceed harmoniously and the benediction of blissful silence will unfailingly visit you.

If you prefer to utilize the variation of *Navi Kriya* given in this Chapter (see [I.2] Intensify the practice of *Navi Kriya*), the process begins with 36 x 2 descents. The next steps are: 36 x 3, 36 x 4...., 36 x 19, 36 x 20. It has been experimentally proven that there is no need to go beyond 36 x 20 repetitions.

As for this variation, it happens that after the first half hour the head movements are hardly noticeable. In other words, the forward, backward, and sideways movement of the chin is reduced to a couple of millimeters!

Effects

A good effect of this practice is a striking increase in mental clarity, probably due to the strong action on the third *Chakra* which governs the thinking process. A more calibrated, precise and clear logical process rises from a more efficient synergy between thoughts and emotions. Intuition flows unimpeded when important decisions are to be made.

Unfortunately, traits of hardness might appear sometimes in your temperament. You will find yourself uttering statements that others find offensive and cutting but that for you, in that moment, are the expression of sincerity. Although sustained by a luminous internal intuition, you might hurt friends through your words and only hours later, being alone and detached, notice how those words were inappropriate.

To understand the reason for this problem, let us look into the meaning of "crossing" the knot of the navel. (*Navi Kriya* is done primarily for this reason and secondarily to unite *Prana* and *Apana* and attract them into the spine.) It is explained that the cutting of the umbilical cord at birth splits a unique reality into two parts: the spiritual and the material. The spiritual, which manifests as joy and calmness, establishes itself in the

higher *Chakras* and in the head; the material establishes itself in the lower *Chakras*. That rupture between matter and spirit inside each human is a permanent source of excruciating conflicts in the lives of many spiritual searchers. Through this *Incremental Routine* and through conscious effort towards harmony between the two dimensions of Spirit and matter in our daily lives, the healing of this rupture takes place. Although the healing is harmonious, visible manifestations can be interpreted negatively by others, often due to a *kriyaban*'s newly acquired confidence and conviction that may appear to be stubbornness or dogmatism. The personality of a *kriyaban* is destined to be ideally collected around a central point and all inner conflicts healed. The effects are perceived inwardly and observed clearly in one's practical life. One feels an inward order settling; each action seems as if it were surrounded by a halo of calmness and headed straight for the goal. It reminds me of Ahab in "Moby Dick" by Herman Melville:

> Swerve me? ye cannot swerve me, … The path to my fixed purpose is laid with iron rails, whereon my soul is grooved to run. … Naught's an obstacle, naught's an angle to the iron way! (*Herman Melville*)

[V. 2] Incremental routine of Kriya Pranayama

After some months (when the previous *Incremental Routine* of *Navi Kriya* is completed or at least half completed), the *kriyaban* can begin a parallel process using the technique of *Kriya Pranayama* and increasing it gradually. 36 x 2, 36 x 3, up to 36 x 20 *Kriya Pranayamas* is a very good plan; 24 x 2, 24 x 3,…..24 x 24 is lighter but also good. Practice in sequence the three phases of *Kriya Pranayama,* abiding by what is said in chapter 6. When the practice is broken into two or three parts – for example between morning and afternoon – you always start from phase 1, then introduce phase 2 and then phase 3.

I have learned to respect all *Kriya* schools, but I will tell you now that when I tried to increase the number of *Kriya Pranayama* that I was taught to perform in my first school, after 60 repetitions of *Kriya Pranayama* I developed so much nervousness that I couldn't remain sitting. Now, with my new *Kriya Pranayama* (closed mouth, partly with *Kechari* and partly without, and mentally chanting *Om* in each *Chakra*) I neared 1000 *Kriya* breaths, always dwelling in the most complete tranquility.

However, I counsel here to move forward prudently, not giving too much attention to the right length for each breath. During this process (*Incremental Routine*) it is absolutely necessary to follow nature, respecting the rhythm of the breath suited to one's own constitution. If you

feel that your breath is too short, don't worry about it! You will have plenty of time in the future to lengthen it. Furthermore, when more than a 100 breaths are practiced, it is wise to make use of the 12 letter *Mantra* "*Om Namo Bhagabate Vasudevaya*" (*Om Na Mo Bha Ga Ba* coming up and *Te Va Su De Va Ya* coming down), which does not mean to apply all the subtle details of *Omkar Pranayama* but simply to utilize that beautiful *Mantra*. During each stage of the process it is important to keep a slender thread of breath up to the completion of the prescribed number. In other words, the process should never become purely mental.

During this *Incremental Routine*, a *kriyaban* can achieve an extremely lofty practice of *Kriya Pranayama* by centering his/her awareness in the higher part of the brain.

This way of practicing *Kriya Pranayama* can be approached only after many *Kriya* breaths. 48 is a good number but 108 is the ideal one.

Shambhavi Mudra is the act of concentrating on the space between the eyebrows, bringing the two eyebrows toward the center with a slight wrinkling of the forehead. There is a higher form of *Shambhavi* that requires closed or half-closed eyelids. (Lahiri Mahasaya in his well-known portrait is showing this *Mudra*.) The eyes look upward as much as possible as if looking at the ceiling but without any head movement. The light tension perceived in the muscles of the eyeballs gradually disappears and the position can be maintained rather easily. A bystander would observe the sclera (white of the eye) under the iris because very often the inferior eyelids relax. Through this *Mudra*, all one's *Prana* collects at the top of the head.

During this *Mudra* the center of awareness is at the upper part of your head. Actually you perceive a light radiating from the upper part of the head. Become stable in this *Mudra* and complete the number of repetitions you have decided to practice.

This practice is a real jewel, it embodies the quintessence of Beauty. Time goes by without much notice and what could seem to be an exhausting task turns out to be as easy as a moment of rest. You will notice the breath is rather slow. You will enjoy the beautiful feeling of fresh air that seems to come up through the spine and pierce each *Chakra,* and of the warm exhaled air permeating each zone of the body from top to bottom. You will actually perceive this and it is not a figment of your imagination!

Your attitude is apparently passive, in actual fact fully sensitive, and therefore active in an intelligent way. The sound of the breath is smooth

and unbroken like the continuous pouring of oil from a bottle. The practice reaches its maximum power and seems to have a life of its own. You will eventually have the impression of crossing a mental state, which is like falling asleep, then suddenly returning to full awareness and realizing you are basking in a spiritual light. It's like a plane emerging from clouds into a clear transparent sky.

[1] It is appropriate to remark that the daily practice of your *Kriya Pranayama* should not be done in the way as described above. A routine totally based on a strong concentration on the *Sahasrara* is not appropriate for beginning or medium level students. Developing a strong magnet in *Sahasrara* is the most powerful way of stimulating the *Kundalini* awakening. This implies bringing up a lot of information from the subconscious mind to the surface. You might experience an entire range of negative moods.

[2] During the *Kriya Pranayama* energy cannot flow within *Sushumna*. Let us visualize the section of the spine as the section of an onion: there are many layers. A *kriyaban* is able to move the *Prana* only along the external layers of the spine. If we wear out one layer after the other, at a certain point something starts to happen in *Sushumna* and we have the impression of being in heaven. The experience of the "bell" in *Anahata* changes into the sound of "many waters." The real sound of *Om* appears guiding the soul to travel through the spine, contacting the Divine Light in the upper part of the head. The perception of the Spiritual Light absorbs your attention.

[3] Don't be upset if on some occasions this routine becomes an extraordinary journey in your memory. It happens indeed that by focusing your attention on the *Chakras* you obtain a particular effect: the inner screen of your awareness begins to display a lot of images. This is a physiological fact and we have reasons to suspect that those who affirm they are exempt from such phenomenon, it is because they do not have enough lucidity to notice it. The *Chakras* are like jewel boxes containing the memory of our whole life and they give rise to the full splendor of lost reminiscences. The essence of past events (the beauty contained in them and never fully appreciated) is lived again in the quiet pleasure of contemplation while, sometimes, your heart is pervaded by a restrained cry. It is a revelation: the light of the Spirit seems to twinkle in what seemed to be trite moments of your life.

[4] During this very delicate period, you can practice *Nadi Sodhana Pranayama* both during your week and especially before starting the long

session of *Kriya Pranayama*. You can take advantage of this useful technique although it is not part of *Kriya Yoga*. As I have already pointed out, *Nadi Sodhana Pranayama* is far more important than expert *kriyabans* are willing to admit. Its practice should always be coupled with the basic techniques of *Kriya Yoga*. Thanks to it, a beginner receives a dramatic transformation – many important patterns of energy imbalance disappear. Without this balancing action it is not easy to achieve a *watchful but peaceful alertness,* which is the basis itself of the *Kriya* meditative state. It is a common experience that after a long practice of *Nadi Sodhana* without adding any other technique you enter a natural meditative state.

[5] Let us reply to an obvious objection: "Why should one practice the Incremental Routine of *Navi Kriya* before that of *Kriya Pranayama*? The reason is that *Navi Kriya* creates that solidity that permits to practice such a challenging procedure such as the Incremental Routine of *Kriya Pranayama*.

[6] If you want to practice an *Incremental routine* of whatever technique and you have not an expert by you to help you in planning the number of repetitions, remember this criterion:
the first step should take 15-20 minutes of your time but to this lapse you must add a minimal routine to prepare the central practice and, at the end, to absorb the effects of your practice. Then week by week you go ahead increasing the number of repetitions until you practice for about six hours.

[VI] Yoni Mudra

After a deep *Kriya* inhalation, having drawn the energy up to the central part of the head, close the ears with the thumbs, the eyelids with the index fingers, the nostrils with the middle fingers, the lips with the ring and the little fingers. Hold your breath while mentally repeating *Om* several times and observe any light in the point between the eyebrows. Hold the breath as long as is comfortable. Both elbows are parallel to the floor and pointing out to the side. Do not let them drop, prop them up somehow, if necessary. During this special light-witnessing act, the index fingers must not put any pressure on the eyes – this would be harmful and serve no purpose! You can draw the eyelids down with the index fingers and apply pressure on the upper cheekbones at the corners of the eyes.

When you feel that you need to breathe, exhale and bring the awareness down along the spine. *Yoni Mudra* is usually performed only once.

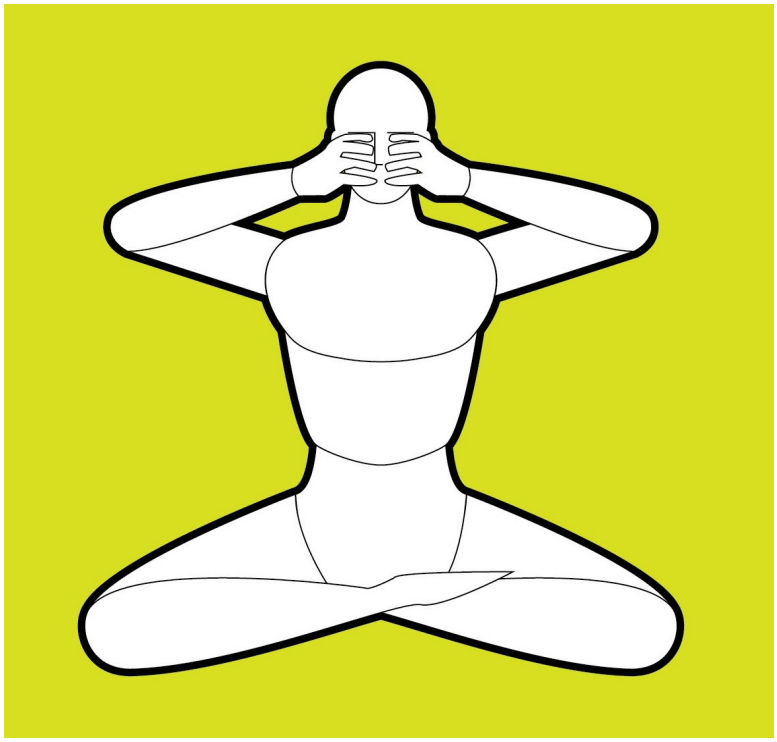


Figure 9. Yoni Mudra

After *Yoni Mudra,* remain concentrated as long as possible at the point between the eyebrows trying to perceive the light in *Kutastha*. Then open your eyes and stare at what is before you but do not observe anything in particular. Watch without watching. After a while you will become aware of a subtle line of white Light, softened, as a fog, around all objects. The Light will become progressively white and greater. Avoid thinking. Keep the gaze fix. After 5 minutes close your eyes and rest for awhile before standing.

NOTA
For what reason have I waited so long before describing a technique that is given during *Kriya* initiation, at the first meeting with a *Kriya* teacher?

Because the fundamental instruction is to increase the number of repetitions of *Om* repetitions (while holding the breath) by one per day up to a maximum of 200. It is recommended to avoid forcing. But how it is possible to achieve these results without forcing? In my opinion this ability can be achieved only in time, especially after a confrontation with the *Thokar* procedure. For the present moment I share a simple remedy that can reduce the discomfort of a long *Kumbhaka*.

At the end of a moderate inhalation (not a typical *Kriya Pranayama* one but a shorter one), a *kriyaban* fully plugs all the head openings except the nostrils, exhales a very small quantity of air, then immediately closes the nostrils. The

thoracic muscles are to be relaxed as if one intended to begin a new inhalation: this will give the sensation that the breath has become quiet in the area between the throat and the point between the eyebrows. In this situation, the repetition of *Om* several times while concentrating on the point between the eyebrows can be enjoyed to its fullest.

Before closing, let me give a last remark. You have read that this technique is to be practiced only at night, at the end of your routine. You can actually practice it anytime! However the technique is best done in the deep calmness of the night, when silence is all around and one is totally and perfectly relaxed. *Yoni Mudra* generates such a concentration of energy at the point between the eyebrows that the quality of the ensuing sleep changes for the better. In other words, after crossing the subconscious layers, your awareness may succeed in reaching the so-called "super conscious" state.

CHAPTER 8
THE BEST WAY TO PRACTICE KRIYA PRANAYAMA

[I] *Technique of Kriya Pranayama as it was explained by Sri Rangin Mukherjee*
[II] *Simple theoretical vision of the four levels of Kriya*
[III] *Best attitude*
[IV] *What you can reasonably expect*

[I] Technique of Kriya Pranayama as it was explained by Sri Rangin Mukherjee

Preamble

The *Kriya Pranayama* as taught by Sri Mukherjee has been the best discovery in the field of *Kriya* since my initiation into *Kriya* in 1975. Sri Mukherjee is a nice person, a very likeable and open-hearted *yogi*. He is well-intentioned. He told me a thing that nobody had ever told: "I don't want to leave this body allowing that this original Kriya dies with me." He really wants to do something practical in this direction.

At the present moment he asked me to communicate his *First Kriya* to every sincerely interested person. This communication can happen verbally but also through written material posted on my web site. He has not asked me (as others did) to erase from my book all the different *Kriya* techniques I learned in the past from other teachers. Although he said they are not original *Kriya*, they represent my past, my toilsome search and should remain. I think that this kind of respect is rare.

You will find in this Chapter the First Kriya technique. [As you surely know the thought of Sri M. is that people who receive this technique of Original First Kriya can practice it while waiting for the opportunity of being formally initiated.]

This document is not official, it contains only an attempt to write here what I think I have understood until now. Only the doc posted separately in the download page in my web site was revised by Sri M.

[I.1] ***Basic tenet of Kriya Yoga***

Now you will learn the Kriya Pranayama technique in order to practice of 108 breaths in a nonstop session. The technique of Kriya Pranayama is practiced to enter Sushumna. In order to enter it, you need to make the breath extremely subtle. Sushumna is very subtle, you can enter Sushumna only by behaving with extreme delicacy. The secret to enter it is that during *Kriya Pranayama* your inner gaze and all your attention are fixed in the central point of the spiritual eye between your eyebrows and not in any other place! This point is *Kutastha*. Put your whole attention there, there should be no strain on the eyes. Everything stays natural.

Many try to raise the energy in *Sushumna* with force, in a coarse way. In this situation, it does not move upwards but is dispersed and burned in the body; this may create diseases because initially the *Nadis* are partially blocked. Your *Kriya Pranayama* will produce only stress. Many endeavor to produce the sound in the throat since the beginning and create a strong visualization of the energy that comes up and down: this is not correct.

Therefore, I repeat, we must start in an extremely simple way (that perhaps we hesitate to call it *Kriya Pranayama*, so much it is simple!) and proceed without expecting striking results. But then, at a certain point, something profound and meaningful will happen.

As for *Kechari Mudra*, the baby *Kechari* is enough for now – baby *Kechari* is to hold the tip of the tongue up, touching the soft part of the palate. Our internal gaze and all the attention is turned to *Kutastha*: only to *Kutastha*.

[I.2] ***Main instruction***

By keeping both the shoulders in a natural position, by expanding the chest a little bit, by bringing the back in a straight position, by lowering gently the chin, by mentally gazing between the two eyebrows, the position becomes steady effortlessly. Do not cross the eyes, simply set yourself in the point between the eyebrows as if this were a cave where you take shelter. While breathing in a natural way, have a deep breath. Chant mentally Om six times in *Kutastha* during inhalation and six times during exhalation. You breath doesn't require effort – therefore you don't make any sound in the throat. Perhaps this will seem to you not a correct way of practicing *Kriya*, but please practice this way, this is what Lahiri Mahasaya and Swami Pranabananda Giri instructed. If your breath is very short, accept this situation without trying, with uneasiness, to lengthen your

breath. A longer breath will appear spontaneously in time. What matters is to stay focused at *Kutastha* with the mental chant of *Om*. Keep the tip of the tongue touching the palate.

Knocking with *Om* at *Kutastha* will give you the power to mentally touch the central point of each *Chakra* – this event happens spontaneously, so don't try to anticipate it through complicated visualizations. This event happens because the the sixth *Chakra Ajna* governs everything: it gives you an alignment with all the *Chakras*. The center of the disk of *Kutastha* (the so-called Spiritual Eye) is also aligned to the center of each *Chakra*. When, while inhaling and exhaling, you mentally chant *Om* the prescribed number or times in the central point of *Kutastha* and this subtle action happens also in each *Chakra*, automatically – even if you are not aware of this fact.

So, while you are inhaling or exhaling you "knock" at the door of *Kutastha* by chanting all these *Oms*. The recommended number of breaths is 108 and therefore (if you don't fall asleep, if are not disturbed by external events) at the end you shall have mentally chanted the syllable *Om* 12x108=1296 times.

Unlike other forms of *Kriya*, during this initial part you don't put *Om* in the physical seat of each *Chakra*. Rather you don't feel the body at all. There is only a sphere of Light in *Kutastha* and all happens there. You, your body, your spine, everything is there. By going ahead, the exercise becomes more and more pleasant. This is due to the stimulation of *Kutastha* which in turn activates the *Chakras*.

[I.3] ***What happens while going ahead in the correct way?***
Something starts to happen (if it doesn't happen today, it will happen tomorrow: it needs to have patience and to encourage the right attitude.) Precisely, at a certain point, you will feel that the spine exists, that it is possible to perceive it in all its length. There is nothing in particular you do. Don't move your awareness down in the body. Meanwhile you notice that the breath is slower and also the mental chant of the various *Oms* is more calm and pleasant. Everything happens automatically.

At a certain point you will feel that the six *Chakras* exist. This subtle revelation comes spontaneously. It is not that sure that to our internal vision the traditional spinal column with the six *Chakras* will appear. There are so many ways to feel the existence of the *Chakras*. No matter what you perceive, go ahead. At a certain point you will realize that the mental chants of *Oms* in *Kutastha* are happening in the center of each *Chakra* too.

But remember that your attention is always at the central point of the spiritual eye. If your focus is diverted from *Kutastha*, all the magic of this process is lost.

At a certain moment you will notice that the breath is accompanied by a delicate sound in the throat. It is the sound of the friction of the air in the throat. In this way the breath becomes slow and subtle. In time the sound of the exhalation reminds the sound produced by a small flute through which a small amount of air passes. Lahiri in his diaries describes it as " Shee sheee " and writes: "like the wind that passes through a crack." Now don't worry how this sound should be.

If all is happening in the right way, if the calmness is still with you, your breath crosses the *Chakras* from the first to the sixth and from the sixth to the first and in each *Chakra* the syllable *Om* is vibrated. This is a delicious situation. Usually this happens toward the end of the 108 breaths. All your being is situated in a bright sphere placed between *Kutastha* and the center of your head. It doesn't matter what you see, it matters that you are perfectly comfortable, absorbed in the beauty of the procedure. While you are approaching at the end of the 108 *Kriya* breaths, you might have the experience of the light in *Kutastha*. This will be intensified by *Yoni Mudra*. After *Yoni Mudra* and *Maha Mudra* you will sit again placing yourself in *Kutastha* without doing nothing. In other words without chanting *Om*, and without paying attention to the breath.

[I.4] Questions and answers

Some *kriyabans* find it difficult to learn how to practice this form of *Kriya Pranayama* because they do no accept the fact that this method is completely different from what they had been practiced before. They feel let down, they are disappointed that in the instruction there is no mention of the spinal path. Therefore it is necessary to reply to very unexpected questions.

Are the breaths uncontrolled like in the Hong So technique?

During the *Hong So* technique we observe the spontaneous process of breathing without caring if it is long or short. Indeed during the Hong So technique, our breath lasts no more than a couple of seconds. By going ahead with this technique the breath tends to disappear. How can the "*Hong So* breathing" sustain the procedure of *Kriya Yoga* that brings gradually to a slow moving of the current up and down the spine? Surely, there are techniques that blend "*Hong So* breathing" with attention to the spine and to the *Chakras*. There are beautiful procedures that utilize that, and Swami Hariharananda's school is greatly based upon that. But in Lahiri

Mahasaya teaching (and we are trying to abide by that dimension) it is stated that in the long run you become able of practicing a very elevated form of *Pranayama*: inhalation and exhalation lengthen up to 22 + 22 seconds. Therefore breathing like Hong So has nothing to do with this form of *Kriya Pranayama*.

We have said that in Sri M.'s *Kriya Pranayama* we utilize a NATURAL breath. But this breath must be slow in order that you have six mental chantings of *Om* while inhaling and six mental chantings of *Om* while exhaling. We must have a breath that can support this mental action. Our breath must go ahead effortlessly but must exist! If we would practice like in the *Hong S*o technique, it will be impossible to have it. The breath must be natural but we must care that it gradually lengthens.

If you have a very short breath and therefore you are not able to mentally pronouncing all these *Oms*, chant those *Oms* more quickly. Your breath will lengthen after a short number of breaths.

I would like to know little more about the process of "knocking" with *Om* in *Kutastha*. If we mentally chant *Om*, then at that time we are not having *Kutastha* in mind.
The point is not: "having *Kutastha in mind*" but being there, inside *Kutastha*. The mind is still, the process of thought is not stressed with the idea "I must have *Kutasth*a in mind otherwise my practice is wrong" No. Nothing of that. You are occupied with two activities, [1] breathing and [2] putting *Om* repeatedly in the central point of *Kutastha*. That's all. If you do this for some minutes, you enter a paradise. This is your choice and with your patience you achieve your divine state of contemplation. "Your choice" means that you have chosen to practice and not to sophisticate.

Some persons speculate about the duration of each *Om*, if after each *Om* there is a short pause. Or if there is a pause between end of 6 *Om* chanting after inhalation or after exhalation... They are free to sophisticate and come to their failure. *Kriya* sometimes might seem a chemical receipt but its nature is that of an art based upon intuition, intelligence, commonsense.

What is the best routine?
108 Kriya breaths [Time required: from 40 to 50 minutes] After that, practice *Yoni Mudra* (only once in 24 hours), 3 *Maha Mudra* and then remain calm, focused on *Kutastha*. In this final part you simply enjoy the peace and the bliss originating from the practice of *Kriya*.

Sri Mukherjee explains clearly that even a beginner can start right away

doing the full 108 repetitions. There is no lower number to begin with , there is no recommended progression. Of course if one is ill, he does not practice at all. And if one, due to circumstances beyond their control, can practice only an inferior number, well, this may happen but it should not become the rule. About other numbers found in the letters written by Lahiri to his disciples, we must understand that those letters represent very personal instructions. Here we are considering a general counsel given to serious kriyabans in a good condition of health.

As for *Maha Mudra* there is a variation recommended by Sri Mukherjee for those who find *Maha Mudra* too difficult. "Lie down on the back. Inhale. Raise the legs maintaining the pelvis on the floor. Join the hands under the knees. Keep your equilibrium on the inferior bones of the pelvis and keep the forehead near the knees. Exhale. Return to the initial position."

To end your routine you can practice as alternative the following procedure:
When the breath is internalized inside Sushumna, keep attention at *Kutastha*. With natural breathing pull one inhalation into *Sushumna* with only one mental chant of *Om* and exhale with another *Om*. Practices like this until you forget yourself and reach the stage of *Samadhi*.

Has Medulla a role? In the correspondence of Lahiri with his disciples, Medulla is often quoted.
Now I will explain what you ask, but remember: if what I say creates confusion, forget it and practice as we have said before.
Feel you are in *Medulla*. Forget completely the physical eyes and concentrate on the mind's eye behind the forehead. Keep the chin some millimeters down and inside in a way that *Kutastha* and *Medulla* are at the same level. Practice in this way and you will understand the role that *Medulla* has.

How can I know when comes the right moment to produce the sounds in the throat?
It is typical of *Kriya school*s to teach you how to produce strong sounds in the throat since the beginning of the practice. They explain that strong sounds in the beginning are ok because they produce cold an warm sensations in the spine. Sri Mukherjee explains that these sensation happen but they are produced by the *Ida* and *Pingala* currents. These currents have nothing to do with being in *Sushumna*. If you insist too much upon them, since the starting of your *Pranayama*, you may cause some problems and lose the magic of the procedure.

Let that throat sounds come later. They will be more enjoyable, will "mesmerize" your concentration and help the procedure. The sounds appear spontaneously when the breath is sufficiently long. Only meditation born intuition can help you to understand when it is good you try to increase the force of your breath and produce the sounds.

Why in the main document posted on the download page it is written: "after entering the Sushumna you have to use force on Pranayama."
This is a hint to the *Second Kriya* stage. It may happen that before ending 108 *Kriyas* breaths you are in *Sushumna*. It might happen that at a certain moment you will feel that the veil of darkness fades away and you witness the brilliance of the Divine Light in the center of which lies the entry point of *Sushumna*. In that wonderful situation you might perceived the color of each *Chakra*.

This is the realm of *Second Kriya* that we will examine later. In this situation it is not necessary to abide by the injunction "Don't overstep the prescribed number: 108." In this case you can go ahead until you enter an ecstatic state and are lost there. Lahiri Mahasaya has said that in this state there is no other instruction to be practiced.

[II] A simple theoretical vision of the four Kriya steps
This vision comes from a conversation (and subsequent elaboration) had with Sri M. It is useful to consider in the right light all the chapters of this second part of the book. Without it, we risk perceiving *Kriya Yoga* as a chaotic a set of techniques – this would lead to leave the *Kriya* practice after some unhappy attempts to devise a rational routine.

Lahiri Mahasaya said that a spiritual path foresees four footsteps in which four internal knots (the *Grantis* mentioned in *Yoga* tradition) are unfastened. They are: tongue, heart, navel, coccyx.
It this the meaning of the four *Kriya* levels?

First Kriya ↔ Opening the knot of tongue
Second Kriya ↔ Opening the knot of heart
Third Kriya ↔ Opening the knot of navel
Fourth Kriya ↔ Opening the knot of Muladhara

I'm sorry to say that the answer is negative.

The *First level* (or stage) of *Kriya* cannot be correlated only with the opening of the knot of the tongue: there is so much that happens in the *first stage*. We can say that in the *First level* all the knots are gradually unfastened. As for the *Second level,* surely the knot of the heart receives a great unfastening action but we know that each *Chakra* receives such an action, therefore a different definition is needed. The *Third level* seems more linked with the opening of the knot of *Muladhara* than of the navel. The *Fourth level of Kriya* seems to be beyond knots. But let us consider each step in a better way:

First stage of Kriya
In this stage we are occupied in making the breath subtle, thus we can guide consciousness and energy into the subtle channel of *Sushumna.* A *kriyaban* tries to master the most important procedure of *Kriya Yoga*: the technique of *Kriya Pranayama*. When we start to practice *Kriya*, the *Ida* and *Pingala Nadis* are partially blocked and the *Prana* has difficulty to flow. They are balanced, purified and detached from *Sushumna* by *Maha Mudra*. Therefore *Maha Mudra* is essential to start.

Then we get along with *Kriya Pranayama*. Once a certain number of breaths (the number depends on the person) is completed, the breath becomes so subtle that doesn't go out from the body through the nostrils. Breath and awareness enter the subtle channel of *Sushumna*. Books describe the phenomenon of *Kundalini* awakening. An solid objective is therefore achieved. What we subsequently want to achieve is guiding *Kundalini* toward her abode at the summit of the head. This will happen by continuing in the months and in the years with the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*.

The achievement of *Kechari Mudra* is undoubtedly of great utility. Other procedures can serve (as the *Thokar*) even if they are not practiced at the fullness of their power. So many things can happen during these years in which we experience the first level. An evident sign that we are ready for the *Second level* it is the gift to enter the state of breathlessness.

Second stage of Kriya
Those who experience the breathless stage can remain in their state without doing any other action and "fall asleep" in the infinite as Sri Aurobindo would, with sore irony, comment. But they can also, especially if prompted by a serious guide, practice the *Kriya Pranayama* without utilizing the breath. This is, in few words the essential part of the *Second level of Kriya*.

Those who practice this way cannot say if they are working with a subtle breath or with something that can be defined " mental substance." With the pure will power they can drive the *Prana* from the body to the base of the spine and then to force it within the spine. Guiding it along the spinal channel can touch with great "mental pressure" every part of it. A deep work happens in the *Chakras*.

The *Tattwas* are the five elements: earth, water, fire, air, ether. Absorbing the meaning of the 5 *Tattwas* has some terrific implications. The forces that withstand the vision of the *Spiritual Light* are to be dissolved.

Third stage of Kriya

When you reach this level, the *Prana* is gathered easily in the point between the eyebrows. The strength of the downward attraction, toward the purely material life is weak. It is easy to discover the essence of each Chakras in the mirror of *Kutastha*. There are different methods to proceed. It is possible to use a subtle form of breath or to forget it entirely and focus only on a mental work. It is possible to receive the help that comes by directing the attention toward the *Chakra* of the heart or to abdicate to it. All depends on the basic philosophy adopted by the Teacher that guides you.

However, in order that the veil of the illusion is not more real and therefore to open the door of an inexhaustible spiritual realization it is necessary to enter *Kutastha*.

Fourth Stage of Kriya

Sooner or later, all the obstacles represented by the *Tattwas* are dissolved. The true wisdom, the truthful vision is born from such event. Abdicating completely the association with the five *Chakras*, the concentration becomes perfect and the mind resides in its natural state. In the region physically placed in the upper part of the brain (commonly called "Thousand petal Lotus) where the dimension of the static *Prana* reigns, there you can experience what Lahiri Mahasaya calls "Eternal Tranquility." The mind finally rests in that quietness and the heart is full of inexpressible joy. Qualities as love, compassion, kindness, understanding, empathy, and magnanimity manifest. When the meditation is completed, the descent of the static *Prana* from the *Sahasrara* toward the *Muladhara* happens. Such descending flow is a true benediction: it brings the spiritual realization in the daily life.

[III] Best attitude

Success in *Kriya* comes by building a solid foundation. The first step is to free your mind from "frenzies and obsessions." Now I will try to clarify what I mean.

[1] Don't believe that something valuable can spring only from an impeccable execution of the "magic recipe" of *Kriya*. Realize how important it is to enjoy the practice as it comes out naturally. Work on refinements only afterward: the practice itself will help you.

Don't call your teacher every other day with tortuous and bizarre questions. If you have many questions, many of them will be answered by the practice itself. Remember that excessive expectations are a shield that prevents the genuine beauty of *Kriya* from entering your life. Behave like a maid who does her daily duties in all tranquility. She takes care of all the details and the awareness of having completed her job is her gratification.

[2] Do not impose upon yourself useless privations and attempt unnatural renunciations.

Some entertain the thought of retiring from active life in order to live a life of self-denial. The few who have the opportunity to achieve this (not necessarily entering a convent but for example quitting their job and living by a modest lifetime annuity) are doomed to discover that this sudden leap into this so ardently longed-for condition does not fulfill their desire for perennial peace coupled with ardent mystical inspiration. The initial feeling of total freedom from worldly engagements breeds good results in meditation but not so deep as imagined. They suffer from an inexplicable drastic diminishing of the sharpness of their concentration. They are fully aware of how insane this is, yet they cannot justify why their free time, instead of being devoted to a deep practice of *Kriya* or to *Japa* or whatever spiritual activity they choose, is depleted in too many useless occupations.

[3] Do not impose chastity to yourself believing you must behave like a saint. Some rational and intelligent *kriyabans* believe impossible things. They state authentic nonsenses and live excruciating conflicts getting to the refusal of love. They try to amputate their individuality and desires; they try to cut them from everything interesting and thrilling in life. There are famous books on *Yoga* demanding impossible things. How precious would be a book that teaches how to use one's own intelligence and to think with

one's own head!

Lahiri Mahasaya admitted in his diary that at times his sexual desire was really strong. One day a disciple put him a direct question: "How can one be definitively free from sexuality?" He replied in a way that let struck dumb the disciple: "I will be free from sexuality only when my body will lie on the funeral pyre." God bless his sincerity! (I knew a *kriyaban* who was so bound to his illusions that he took the aforementioned episode as a sign that ... Lahiri Mahasaya was not spiritually realized!)

[4] Instead abide by common-sense guided health rules. Often there is a clear split between the new interest in meditation and other well-rooted social habits. After months of practice, some changes in a *kriyaban*'s temperament and habits will appear spontaneously. Unfortunately many are not able to realize they are slaves to bad habits. Let us take for example the problem of smoking. How many have a clear vision of the real situation? Paradoxically, it is easier to quit smoking because of a new ecological vogue than as a result of a lucid vision of one's addiction to nicotine.

[IV] What you can reasonably expect

In time there is a greater reward for those who practice *Kriya* conscientiously even if they see no apparent result. Something tremendously vast will manifest and crush down any dichotomy of worthy/unworthy, pure/impure. It is not only a matter of astral sounds and light, cosmic expansion, or basking in endless joy – your very perception of Reality will change. Some will rediscover an almost forgotten potentiality of aesthetic enjoyment (as if they had eyes and heart for the first time); others will be deeply moved by the significance of their family, by the value of lifelong friendship and will be surprised by the intensity of the responses of love from their heart.

Sometimes the experience of a substantial and spontaneous rising of energy through the spine happens. Although being blissful in itself, you could react with a feeling of uneasiness and undefined fear. Usually this fear (which can turn into real anguish or panic) is absorbed in a short time, without problems. Sometimes, you might feel being walking in equilibrium on a rope between mental health and alienation. This phenomenon has happened to almost all mystics. There is nothing to fear!

In time you will be able to see the Divine in everything, to find joy in everything: work, free time, family, friends, contemplation of nature, art ... you will learn to achieve the breathless state and after the practice of *Kriya,* you will have tears of joy in your eyes. You will have no doubt

about the purpose of life: to fully enjoy the spiritual dimension and to create harmony between it and the normal active life.

"Emotional Maturity" is the first glaring effect of a couple of incremental routines. Emotional maturity is a healthy relationship with your emotions and instincts. When you have started to develop the ability to keep your emotions at bay – I mean superficial emotions – in such a way that only deep sentiments will guide your decisions. "Emotional Maturity" means having a healthy relationship with reality, means mental health, means practical wisdom. This fact is serious and tremendously important. We cannot conceive how a *kriyaban* who hasn't developed this faculty can "survive" on the *Kriya* path. It is difficult to remain faithful to the *Kriya* path when negative, depressive emotions can suddenly make your trust in *Kriya* disintegrate, fall to pieces!

CHAPTER 9
CLASSIC SCHOOL: THOKAR AND ITS DEVELOPMENTS

[I] *How this school faces the second level of Kriya – elementary form of Thokar*
[II] *How this school faces the third level of Kriya – advanced form of Thokar*
[III] *Importance of the practice of Navi Kriya before Thokar*
[IV] *Concept of micro movement*
[V] *Technique to enter the breathless state*
[VI] *Japa 432 technique (some call it Fourth Kriya)*
[VII] *Gayatri Kriya*
[VIII] *Stimulation of particular centers in the brain*

In the classic school (the most common, the one that probably comes from Sri Panchanon Bhattacharya), the *First level of Kriya* corresponds to what we have learned in chapters 6 and 7. The *Second level* corresponds to the *Elementary form of Thokar*, the *Third level* to the *Advanced form Thokar*. As for the *Fourth Kriya level* there are many doubts. For the present moment I have good reasons to consider the two techniques "*Japa 432*" and "*Gayatri Kriya*" a good way to conclude one's *Thokar* practice entering a high meditation state.

[I] How this school faces the second level of Kriya – elementary form of Thokar

The practice of *Thokar* (both in the elementary form and, for evident reasons, in advanced form, is always preceded by the practice of *Kriya Pranayama* and of *Navi Kriya.*

[I.1] Elementary form of Thokar: a very spread variation

With the chin resting on your chest, inhale while simultaneously raising your awareness along the spinal column. The syllables of the *Vasudeva* Mantra (*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*) are to be placed mentally in each *Chakra* location. Touch each *Chakra* with the first six syllable of the *Mantra* (*Om* is placed in the first *Chakra*, *Na* in the second, *Mo* in the third, *Bha* in the fourth, *Ga* in the fifth and *Ba* in *Bindu.*) Raise the chin as if following the inner movement.

The hands (with interlocked fingers) are placed on the navel area to create a mental pressure on the first three *Chakras*. Contract moderately the muscles at the base of the spine. The breath produces only a slight, weak sound in the throat or it comes out soundless. When the chin is up and horizontal, the inhalation ends, and the awareness is in *Bindu.*

Hold your breath. Hold the muscle contraction at the base of the spine. The head begins its rotation by moving to the left shoulder (left ear moves slightly toward the left shoulder, the face does not turn left or right and the movement is free of all bouncing); *Teeee* is thought in the *Medulla*. The head tilts back a little and in a sweeping arc reaches the right shoulder, (the right ear coming near the right shoulder), the syllable *Va* is thought in the cervical *Chakra*. The rotation proceeds, the head bends forward just a little and moves left until the left ear is near the left shoulder (the face is not turned to the left).

From this position, the chin is tilted down diagonally as if to strike the center of the chest, while simultaneously *Su* is intensely vibrated in the heart *Chakra*. A kind of hitting is felt in the heart *Chakra.* A short pause follows: just what is needed to be immersed in the radiation of energy emanating from that *Chakra*. The contraction at the base of the spinal column is eased off; via a very subtle exhalation the remaining syllables of the *Mantra* are "placed" in the first three *Chakras – De* into the third one, *Va* into the second one, and *Yaaaa* into the first one. While doing this, the head is usually kept down.

If you want to practice with more intensity, at the moment of the strike at the heart *Chakra* with *Su*, while applying all the three *Bandhas* (*Mula, Uddiyana*, and *Jalandhara*), continue to hold the breath there for an extra few seconds before exhalation. A warm sensation will be felt around and inside the fourth *Chakra* region.

The duration of this process is about 24 seconds. Repeat the procedure 12 times. Traditionally, one begins with 12 rotations and increases by one every day up to a maximum of 200 repetitions.

Thokar is practiced after *Kriya Pranayama.* The preliminary action of *Kriya Pranayama* is strictly necessary. At the end of this practice pause with the awareness centered both in the heart *Chakra* and in the light manifesting at the point between the eyebrows.

Instead of increasing the number of repetitions of one a day, you can add six repetition per week. In this way it is more easy to remember the number of repetition you are supposed to do. During the first week practice

12 repetitions each day. Then consider the practice of 18 repetitions each day et cetera.

If there are problems, practice this technique every other day. The third week (just to give you an example) you can practice 24 repetitions on alternate days. It is not necessary to practice every day; rather it is wise to work three days a week on the average. When you reach a consistent number of repetitions (more that 60) the effects are very strong. Therefore be very careful.

NOTE
Do not allow the weight of the head to be the sole force pushing the chin toward the chest: letting your head simply drop would definitely be harmful. A mindful physical effort is needed to lower the chin.

When you practice over 50 repetitions, the movements of the head should be only hinted at: the chin does not come close to the chest and the striking of the fourth *Chakra* is mainly achieved by the sheer power of mental concentration. If you have any difficultly whatsoever, stop and do not try at any cost to reach the 200 repetitions.

The presence of physical problems (the cervical vertebrae are indeed vulnerable) may require practicing on alternate days. It is better to add more cycles over time rather than face the prospect of experiencing continuous head and neck pain throughout the entire day!

[I.2] Elementary form of Thokar: a very intense variation

Let us suppose you are at the end of inhalation, with chin parallel to the ground. Bend your head forward and touch your chin to your chest. Hold your breath. From this position, move your head to the left turning your face to the left and raising your chin until it is over the left shoulder and parallel to the floor.

Then start a slow rotation of your head back in counterclockwise direction. When your head is centered between the shoulders and your chin is up as much as possible (and the muscles at the back of your neck are contracted) chant *Te* inside the heart *Chakra*. Release the contraction and continue the counterclockwise rotation of your head so that your right ear moves toward the right shoulder (this means that you don't turn your face to the right.)

Do not make a pause there but continue the circle until your chin is again centered, touching your chest. Without pausing there, continue the motion by moving your head to the left, turning your face to the left and raising your chin until it is over the left shoulder. At that point, slightly

raise your chin, contract the cervical muscles and chant *Va* inside the heart *Chakra*. Release the contraction and continue the rotation, but this time when you reach the midpoint between the shoulders (chin is not forcefully up like in the previous round), gently tilt the head forward, bring the chin to the chest, and chant *Su* in the heart *Chakra*. Now raise your chin until it is again parallel to the floor and start the exhalation. Chant *De* at *Manipura*, *Va* at *Swadhisthana*, and *Ya* at *Muladhara*.

Remark
The above description of the movement of the head is divided into parts. But the complete movement should be smooth and without breaks.

[I.3] Elementary form of Thokar: action upon all the Chakras
The effort of creating energetic pressure is distributed on each *Chakra*.

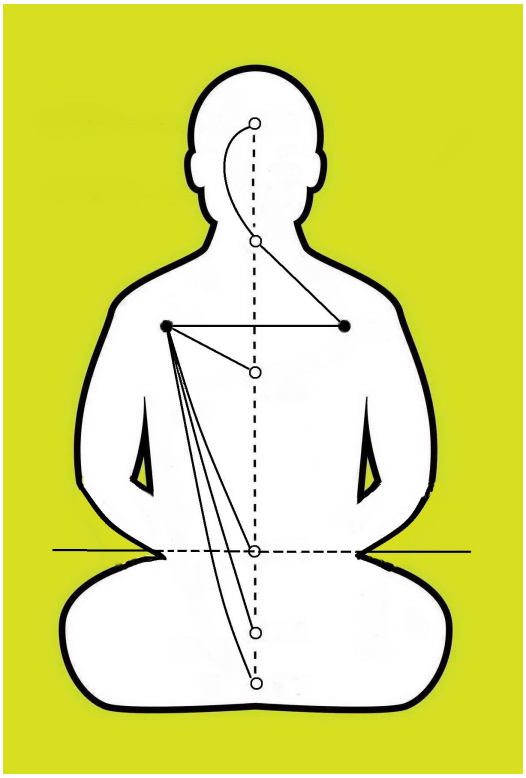


Figure 10. The person in figure is seen from behind

Inhale with a subtle breath and come up with the awareness... Om, Na, Mo, Bha, Ga, Ba (Ba is either in Medulla or in Bindu.) Hands interwoven are upon the navel. The chin comes up with your awareness.

During the descent utilize a subtle exhalation. What does "subtle" mean?it means that you start the exhalation but by going ahead you see by your own experience that this breath dissolves in the Chakras. This happens

indeed: it is a joy to experience it.

The movements of the head are easy to understand. You come down from the sixth center moving the head to the left of few millimeters, then return to the center but with chin slightly aloft perceiving the cervical Chakra. Without stopping, turn your face toward right.

The chin comes down a little bit in order to touch the front part of the right shoulder. There is no stress in this movement. Vibrate "Teee" in the point at the right that you see in the illustration. Then move slowly to the symmetrical position and chant "Va" in the correct point that you see at left. From this position there is a brusk movement of the chin to hit the heart *Chakra*. Then the head returns to the departing position and comes down to hit the third *Chakra*... then the second, then the first.

At the end of this action, you do not know whether you have exhaled or not. Inhale, repeat the procedure.

This variation of *Thokar* asks prudence because it has a strong influence upon the behavior of the person during the daily life.

Often the effects of this practice are difficult to metabolize. The process tries to the limit your psychological soundness (for this reason it is not commonly taught.) It is not surprising that some *kriyabans* reach the conclusion that this procedure generates effects which are essentially negative.

This procedure requires great care because it affects the person's behavior during daily life. You could excessively react to trivial impediments and irrational behavior. In short, some sharp personality traits of yours might surface with a force that in some cases could be "destructive." Obviously, they do not appear out of nothing, they are not caused by the technique – they express what you had held within you for a long time.

They have also reported to feel drained of any devotion, motivation and joy. Some hint at the "dark night of the soul" described by mystics. This is surely an exaggeration. In my opinion the best solution is to conclude the routine by resuming the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*, second part, for a great number, until the breath seems to disappear. Concluding with *Navi Kriya*, *Maha Mudra* and *Yoni Mudra* is also advisable.

[II] How this school faces the third level of Kriya – advanced form of Thokar

The *Advanced Form of Thokar* is an acceleration of its elementary form – the action of *Thokar* is repeated while holding the breath. In *Kriya* literature it is explained that the heart knot is struck by the *Elementary Form of Thokar* and then cut by the *Advanced Form.*

Important clarification before describing the Advanced form of Thokar
Consider how we breathe during *Kriya Pranayama*. While we are inhaling we expand the belly; while we are exhaling the belly contracts. The *Reversed Breath* is the opposite: when we inhale the abdomen contracts, when we exhale the abdomen relaxes. If we want to practice the *Advanced Form of Thokar* in the best way we must learn this way of breathing, otherwise our undertaking ends with fruitless attempts. This is an explanation that *kriyabans* usually don't receive.

[II.1] Customary form of explanation

After inhaling (with *Om, Na, Mo*...) and raising the *Prana* to the upper part of the lungs, partially relax the muscles of the thoracic cage as if you were going to begin a new inhalation. The act of sealing the lungs (trachea) as when diving, should be avoided. In this relaxed mood, repeat numerous cycles of the head movements unhurriedly. Consequently the mental chanting of *Te* in *Medulla*, *Va* in the cervical and *Su* in the heart *Chakra* is done several times (*Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su ...*) while holding the breath. Stop the procedure and exhale when feeling discomfort!

Then slowly exhale and place the syllables *De, Va, Ya* in *Chakras* three, two, one respectively. While doing this, keep your head down. This practice is done rigorously once a day.

As for the repetition of *Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su...,* as soon as you feel your attention totally focused on the heart *Chakra,* put not only the syllable *Su* but also the two previous ones, *Te* and *Va,* in the heart *Chakra*. From that moment onwards, the syllables *Te, Va* and *Su* are mentally placed only in the heart *Chakra*.

To give an idea of the speed of the movements, the entire process from inhalation to exhalation with 12 repetitions of the rotation of the head (each rotation concluding with the movement of the chin toward the chest) lasts around 70-80 seconds. Traditionally, one begins with 12 cycles of the head movements unhurriedly during one single breath and increases by one every day up to 200 repetitions. This *Kriya* is considered mastered when one reaches 200 rotations without interrupting the *Kumbhaka* state.

Of course, this is too difficult. At a certain point, during this increasing process, when you cannot go over a certain number or rotations – unless going ahead rotating your head too quickly, which is silly – should you accept your defeat? No, I hope you will consider what I am explaining now.

[II.2] Alternative explanation

Inhale slowly and steadily through your nose and at the same time pull-in the stomach and lift up the the perineum. While inhaling, mentally repeat *Om, Na, Mo*...and raise the *Prana* to the upper part of the lungs. Then partially relax the muscles of the thoracic cage as if you were going to begin a new inhalation.

Focus your attention on the upper part of your rib cage. A part of this attention goes to the base of the spine. Mentally chant *Om, Om, Om*... rapidly (about two chants of *Om* per second) feeling your awareness like an ant, crawling up the innermost channel of the spine millimeter by millimeter from *Muladhara* upwards.

After no more than 4-6 seconds, you'll have reached the heart *Chakra;* go up further, in the region between the fourth and the fifth *Chakra* (the region related to the upper part of lungs and chest.) You will perceive a real, tangible freedom from the breath. Be sure to feel *Prana* pervade the rib cage and become calm and stable there. [6]

Well, taking this as a basis, utilize the best attitude you have to reach a real, tangible freedom from the breath. Remain stable in this state, without ever letting the abdomen and the rib cage relax and the *Prana* slide down. In this mental and physical state you practice the *Advance Form of Thokar*. You will discover how beautiful and comforting is the experience of rotating your head (with *Te, Va, Su, Te, Va, Su*....) while the breath seems frozen in the thorax region.

Simplify the dynamic and the physical intensity of the movements. Move the chin toward the chest before completing the head rotation. Namely, after rotating your head from left to right, let your chin "fall" toward the chest from the right side, then lift it to left side and continue with the rotations. By increasing the rotations, the movements of the head should be only hinted at and the chin should not come close to the chest.

[6] The counsel to mentally chanting *Om, Om, Om*... really draws energy in the spine from all the parts of your body and guides it toward the spine. If your body condition is perfect (if you are moderate with eating and your are on an empty stomach) you will notice that your breath is dissolved in some inexplicable way in the body.

When you feel you have neared your limit holding your breath, while keeping the chest expanded and the abdominal muscles and diaphragm contracted and immobile, let a minimal (almost imperceptible) sip of air go out whenever the chin is lowered toward the chest and let an imperceptible sip of air enter whenever the chin is brought up.

Do not do any specific act of inhaling or exhaling: relax and allow the phenomenon we have described to happen of its own accord. The sensation will always be that of not breathing at all. Now exhale the air through your mouth and at the same time push out your stomach and let your perineum relaxed.

NOTE
The counsel of not to practice a perfect *Kumbhaka* is strange, but if you go ahead with this and repeat it a sufficient number of times (usually it's a matter of a couple of months), one day you will make a beautiful discovery: this strategy is no more necessary! Thanks to the effect of this practice upon the ganglia exerting an influence on the central cardio-respiratory mechanisms, the practice happens in better and better conditions, until one day you will be able to complete the 200 rotations without breathing and without hurry. You will experience a state of consciousness characterized by heightened feeling of freedom from physical laws. It is a matter of inner realization – an instinct which is discovered in time.

[III] Importance of the practice of Navi Kriya before Thokar

It has been explained that when the energetic state created in the abdominal region ascends into the heart region, the heart knot is completely unfastened. Strong experience of *Bhakti* happen. This technique brings you in a condition of grace where you witness the Divine who remains always disguised behind symbols. The Divine is in front of you but somehow distant as within a kind of ideal horizon. You feel It, you recognize It and you feel limitless joy. Your reaction is crying of nostalgic longing. At the end of this *Kriya* practice you will find tears in your eyes.

> My worship is of a very strange kind. Holy water is not required. No special utensils are necessary. Even flowers are redundant. In this worship, all gods have disappeared, and emptiness has merged with euphoria. (Lahiri Mahasaya)

[IV] Concept of micro movement

Let us describe how the practice of *Thokar* can induce a micro movement in the heart *Chakra* and then in each *Chakra*.

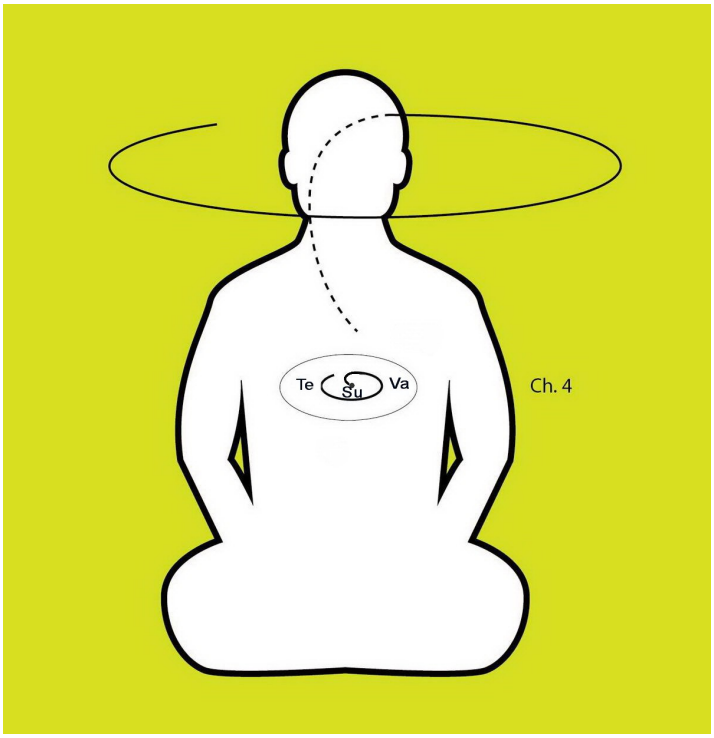


Figure 11. Micro movement as it is perceived in Chakra 4

During the practice of the *Advanced form of Thokar,* if you visualize the fourth *Chakra* as a horizontal disk having a diameter of approximately one inch, it is easy to perceive an inner movement sensation on its surface. While the head is moving left, you perceive in the heart *Chakra* a weak internal movement to the left. (It is the moment in which you mentally chant the syllable "*Te.*") While the head is moving right, you perceive a weak internal movement to the right. (You mentally chant the syllable "*Va.*") When the head bows forward, you mentally chant "*Su*", the inner movement reaches the center of the fourth *Chakra*. You vibrate there the syllable *Su*. You go ahead repeating: *Te Va Su, Te Va Su*.... while taking care that each physic movement of the head be only hinted and gradually disappears. After a couple of minutes, you attention is totally introverted and the breath imperceptible.

The *Micro movement* procedure could be extended to each *Chakra*. By repeating in each *Chakra* the mental chant of the *Te Va Su*, you have the power to touch with an almost physically intensity the core of each *Chakra*.

[V] Technique to enter the breathless state

Nel cammino *Kriya* "assenza di respiro" è un termine che troverai spesso e quindi proviamo a chiariamolo fin d'ora. Breathlessness does not mean that I hold the breath forcefully, trying to break the apnea world record. The breathless state is characterized by the fact that the breath is entirely non-existent for long, long times – times that are considered impossible by scientific knowledge.

The breathless state is the true Initiation into the Spiritual Path of *Kriya Yoga*. The impact of this experience means far more than the words can convey. In my opinion one needs on the average two to three years of regular practice of the *First Kriya* techniques. A detox cleansing dietary regimen coupled to intensive practice of *Japa* is the ultimate decisive push.

This is a very good method of experiencing the breathless state.

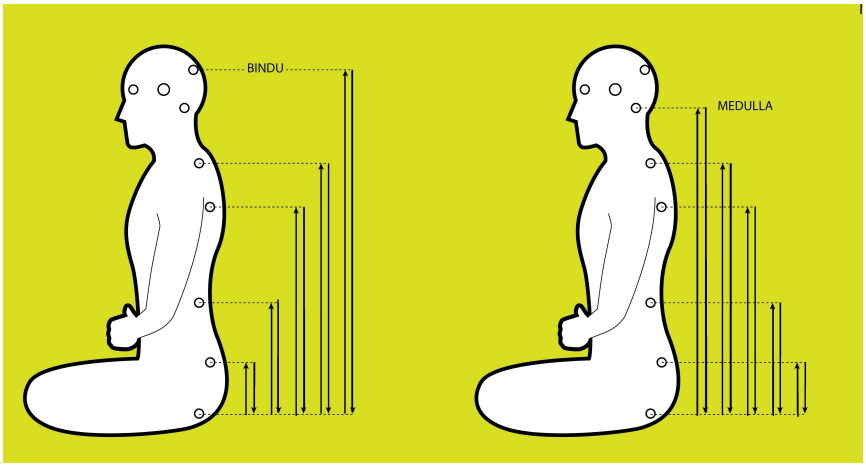


Figure 12. Exercise to transform the nature of the breath

You perceive the micro movement in each *Chakra* while following a particular order of concentration upon them. Focus your attention on the *Muladhara Chakra*. Vibrate (think with emphasis) "*Te Va Su*" in *Muladhara*. Do it once. The *Micro movement* works in a formidable way to bring your consciousness inside *Sushumna,* calming significantly your breath. When you think "*Su*" in the center of the *Chakra,* feel an ecstatic sensation. When it comes natural to have a very short inhalation, inhale only what is necessary, pause an instant and concentrate on the second *Chakra.* Hold the breath gently and vibrate "*Te Va Su*" in the second *Chakra*. Exhale when you feel natural to exhale, concentrate on *Muladhara,* vibrate *"Te Va Su"* there. When it becomes natural to have a very short inhalation, inhale only what is necessary, pause an instant and concentrate on the third *Chakra*. Hold the breath gently and vibrate "*Te Va*

Su" in the third *Chakra*. Exhale when you feel like exhaling, concentrate on *Muladhara* and vibrate *"Te Va Su"* there.

Go on like that, repeating the procedure between *Muladhara* and the fourth *Chakra; Muladhara* and fifth *Chakra; Muladhara – Bindu; Muladhara – Medulla; Muladhara* – fifth *Chakra; Muladhara* – fourth *Chakra; Muladhara* – third *Chakra; Muladhara* – second *Chakra*. As you see, one cycle is made of 10 short breaths. Repeat more than one cycle. Go ahead until you realize that your body is sustained by internal energy. Go ahead not only feeling the *Chakras* but also the whole body. The breath stops completely: it is like a miracle.

> "No me pidáis que lo explique. Tengo el fuego en las manos"
> (*Garcia Lorca*)

[VI] Japa 432 technique (some call it Fourth Kriya)

In some schools this practice is called: "*Fourth Kriya*." I follow the theoretical scheme introduced in Chapter 8. According to such scheme, the technique that I am going to describe it is the quintessence of the *Third Kriya* and as such I will look at it. While working with this procedure we are not in the dimension of *Sahasrara* which is the seat of static *Prana* but we is still working on *Kutastha*.

In the letters of Lahiri Mahasaya to his disciples, this technique is mentioned as *Japa 432*. 432 comes from the computation 36x12= 32. In fact, our purpose is to perceive the *micro movement* 36 times in each *Chakra*, coming up and going down in the well known centers: *Muladhara, Swadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha, Bindu, Medulla, Vishuddha, Anahata, Manipura, Swadhisthana, Muladhara.*

Let us start: become aware of the *Muladhara Chakra*. Contract the muscles next to the physical location of the *Chakra*. The contraction can be repeated two-three times. Through a deep (not necessarily long as in the *Kriya Pranayama*) inhalation visualizes the *Muladhara* coming up into the point between the eyebrows, where it is perceived as a full moon. The *Chakra* doesn't come up "touching" the other *Chakras*. These don't exist now. Hold your breath and focus in the inner space in-between the eyebrows. *Kechari Mudra* is precious here. [7] On the screen between the

[7] "Ke-chari" is translated as "the state of those who live in the ether." A particular space is felt in the region between the tip of the tongue and *Kutastha*. Merging with this empty space, makes it possible for a *kriyaban* to perceive the rhythm of each *Chakra* and differentiate one from another

eyebrows a particular experience of color, different for each *Chakra,* grasps the concentration of the *kriyaban*. The *Mantra Te Va Su* should be mentally chanted 36 times. Then, through a long exhalation, the *Muladhara* returns ideally in its seat. A similar procedure is to be done with the other *Chakras*: *Swadhisthana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishuddha, Bindu, Medulla, Vishuddha, Anahata, Manipura, Swadhisthana* and *Muladhara* again.

Have the maturity of not doing violence to your body. This is a very elevated technique, it is not a joke. A mature person will hold the breath for smaller intervals and then, in due time, will try to increase the concentration, to relax more deeply, until the basic instructions will become feasible, possible.

The familiarity with the breathless state gives the ability to pause on every *Chakra* feeling the essence of the *Tattwa* connected with that *Chakra*. The ideal number of 36 repetitions must not be overcome. The *Tattwa* connected with a *Chakra* exerts a particular power to "enchant" a person's attention; we must remain on a *Chakra* only the proper time. Therefore having 36 repetitions of the *Mantra* is the perfect way of practicing this technique.

[VII] Gayatri Kriya

This technique is very ancient and existed before Lahiri Mahasaya begun his mission of spreading *Kriya*. Its structure is well known in India and is considered the subtlest way of using the *Gayatri Mantra*. It contains the same principles of the technique *Japa 432*. Therefore there is no reason to practice both.

The *Gayatri Mantra* is considered to be a supreme vehicle for gaining spiritual enlightenment. The purest form of *Gayatri Mantra* is *Tat Savitur Varenyam Bhargho Devasya Dhimahi Dhiyo Yonaha Prachodayat.* (Oh, great Spiritual Light who has created the Universe, we meditate upon Your glory. You are the embodiment of Knowledge. You are the remover of all Ignorance. May You enlighten our Intellect and awaken our Intuition.)

This *Mantra* is prefaced with either a short or a long invocation. The short invocation is: *Om Bhur, Om Bhuvah, Om Swaha.* The terms *Bhur, Bhuvah, Swaha* are invocations to honor the three planes of existence (physical, astral, and causal respectively) and to address their presiding deities. The long invocation is: *Om Bhur, Om Bhuvah, Om Swaha, Om Mahah, Om Janah, Om Tapah, Om Satyam.* This invocation is more complete since it recognizes that there are more planes of existence: the seven *Lokas*. *Mahah* is the mental world, the plane of spiritual balance; *Janah* is the

world of pure knowledge; *Tapah* is the world of intuition; *Satyam* is the world of Absolute, Ultimate Truth. We can be satisfied with the explanation that these sounds are used to activate the *Chakras* and connect them to the seven spiritual realms of existence. In our procedure, we use only the opening long invocation in its complete form and not all the parts of the *Gayatri Mantra*. The *Kriya* tradition we are following here links *Manipura* with *Om Mahah* and *Anahata* with *Om Swaha*. The reason is that the world of thinking, evoked by *Om Mahah,* is more appropriate to the nature of the third *Chakra*, while the causal world of pure ideas, evoked by *Om Swaha,* is related to *Anahata Chakra.*

Practical instruction
Become aware of the *Muladhara Chakra*. Contract the muscles near its physical location: the contraction can be repeated two-three times. Through a deep inhalation (not necessarily as long as in *Kriya Pranayama*) visualize the *Muladhara Chakra* coming up into the point between the eyebrows, where you perceive it as a full moon. You don't come up "touching" the other *Chakras*. Now they don't exist. Hold the breath and focus on the "inner space" between the eyebrows. This comes out easily with *Kechari Mudra*. [8] On the screen between the eyebrows, a particular color experience happens – this color is different for each *Chakra*. Mentally chant at least three times the specific *Mantra* for the *Muladhara Chakra: Om Bhur.* Then, through a long exhalation, ideally lower this *Chakra* from the point between the eyebrows to its proper location in the spine. Now you know what to do with each other *Chakra*.

The *Mantras* to be utilized are:

Om Bhur for *Muladhara*;
Om Bhuvah for *Swadhisthana*;
Om Mahah for *Manipura*;
Om Swaha for *Anahata*;
Om Janah for *Vishuddha*;
Om Tapah for *Medulla*

[8] "Ke-chari" is literally translated as "the state of those who fly in the sky, in the ether". A particular "space" is created in the region between the tip of the tongue and the point between the eyebrows and is perceived as a "vacuum", although it is not a physical void. By merging into this empty space, it is easier for a *kriyaban* to perceive the rhythms of each *Chakra* and distinguish them one from another.

Add a particularly intense concentration at the point between the eyebrows. Hold your breath; raise your eyebrows, become aware of the light. Repeat *Om Satyam.*

Now complete the "round" by lifting *Chakras* 5, 4, 3, 2, 1, always using the contraction, the chanting of the *Mantra,* being aware of any particular Light experience in *Kutastha*. If possible repeat the procedure 6 to 12 rounds.

In *Kriya* tradition, the *Chakras* are related to the five *Tattwas*: earth, water, fire, air, and ether. Offering each *Tattwa* individually to the light of the "spiritual eye" gathering and intensifying in the region between the eyebrows is the highest action ever conceived to dispel the last shell of illusion. The experience of the changing colors in the spiritual eye means to perceive the particular vibration and light frequency of each *Chakra*. By familiarizing with these frequencies leads you to the realization that all the universe exists in *Kutastha*.

Advanced practice
In time it will be possible for you to mentally repeat "*Om Bhur*" 36 times holding your breath. This gives you the power to tune with earth-*Tattwa* experiencing the peculiar "vibration" of the *Muladhara Chakra*.

At the same time, by repeating the *Mantra* "*Om Bhuvah*" 36 times it will be possible to tune with water-*Tattwa* having its seat in the second *Chakra*.... then comes the turn of the fire-*Tattwa*...

[VIII] Stimulation of particular centers in the brain
The *micro movement* procedure can be also utilized to stimulate or activate particular centers in the brain.

Inhale from *Muladhara* into the **Medulla**. Hold your breath. Oscillate slowly your head left – right – return to center, keeping the focus of concentration in *Medulla*. Mentally chant *Te* when you move to the left, *Va* when you move to the right, *Su* when you return to the center. Repeat three times, always holding your breath. A calm exhalation follows.

Now inhale from the second *Chakra* into the **Cerebellum**. Hold your breath. Repeat three times the same oscillations of the head with *Te, Va, Su*, focusing all your attention on the Cerebellum. Exhale and come down to the third *Chakra* location.

Inhale from the third *Chakra* into the **Pons Varolii** (to perceive it, come from the cerebellum toward the center of the head, over *Medulla* – a few

centimeters forward). Hold your breath. Repeat the procedure with *Te, Va, Su* three times, focusing all your attention on this center. Exhale and come down in the fourth *Chakra.*

Inhale from the fourth *Chakra* into the **Thalamus**. To perceive it, slightly swing your head back and forth. Feel a horizontal line that comes from the point between the eyebrows backwards. At the same time feel the vertical line that comes down from the *fontanelle*. The Thalamus is the point of intersection of the two lines. When you have it, repeat three times at that point the procedure with *Te, Va, Su*. Exhale and come down in the fifth *Chakra*.

Inhale from the fifth *Chakra* into a point **midway between Thalamus and Fontanelle**. To perceive it, swing slightly your head back and forth. Feel a horizontal line that comes from *Bindu* forwards. At the same time feel the vertical line that comes down from the *fontanelle*. This center is the point of intersection of the two lines. Repeat three times in that point the procedure with *Te, Va, Su*. Exhale and come down in *Medulla*.

Inhale from *Medulla* into **Fontanelle**. Repeat three times in that point the procedure with *Te, Va, Su*. Exhale remaining in *Fontanelle*.

Inhale into *Fontanelle*, exhale from *Fontanelle* into the point midway between Thalamus and Fontanelle.
Inhale into *Fontanelle*, exhale from *Fontanelle* into the Thalamus.
Inhale into *Fontanelle*, exhale from *Fontanelle* into the Pons Varolii
Inhale into *Fontanelle*, exhale from *Fontanelle* into the Cerebellum.
Inhale into *Fontanelle*, exhale from *Fontanelle* into the Medulla.
Remain with your awareness in the Medulla or practice the following procedure devoted to stimulate the crown of the head.

Appendix: Effects of intensive practice of Thokar

[1] The most precious effect is the manifestation of a particular joy in the heart as if you moved around with an ardent brazier in your heart. This will develop in a *Bhakti* whose intensity will surprise you. You will learn to practice the presence of God and perform your daily duties in His presence.

Very good effects are also perceived during the practice of *Kriya Pranayama*. *Kutastha* is perceived as a cave where you sit with the firm intention of remaining immobile enjoying the two beautiful sensations of the breath moving in the spine. There is no guided visualization of energy coming up and down. You do not guide anything. You are only aware of the
Kriya procedure (long breath, throat sounds.) The more you maintain this attitude, the more intense will be the sensations in the spine. You do NOTHING,

but you are always, continuously, aware. Don't worry about the sounds in the throat, let them appear spontaneously are beautiful or not, strong or not. Breath after breath, all becomes more and more strong. The strongest moment is always at the end of each exhalation.

[2] Let us deal with emotions because it is upon them that the practice of *Thokar* acts in an admirable way. I have tried to retrace the theme "emotions" in some oriental books and have found so much rhetoric, too many words without practical meaning. They distinguish between positive (affection, happiness, contentment...) and negative (envy, aggressiveness, illusion ...) emotions, but at the end of boring discussions you still have not grasped the essential fact: untamed emotions can create disaster in one's life. We are governed by superficial emotions and instincts that include our religious conditioning, our weak points, our fears, our doubts and our pessimism. It is important to have the ability to keep emotions at bay, going our way even when all the world and even our closest friends are trying to convince us to follow theirs.

We all know how frantic and hysterical emotions often rise unexpectedly from one's inner self, then disappear after a while. They actually express a reality devoid of authentic depth but their propulsive action inevitably results in hurried acts accompanied by a sort of cerebral fever, nourished by a narrow, visceral pleasure. When passion inflames one's whole being, it is not possible to be guided by common sense; the consequence is that our deeper and most earnest choices sometimes withdraw to an irrevocable halt.

Just as during the summer hail stones are molded, condensed and enlarged in the air before falling down to the earth and cause disasters, fatal decisions take shape in advance in one's imagination. During daily, frequent daydreams, the perspective of renouncing something positive which requires a great commitment throws a false light upon our immediate future, so that what in the past would appear as an act of cowardice, now seems to glitter at the horizon of our life, like a dull, flat, somber sky that suddenly lights up, serene, in luminous azure blue. When we listen to such alluring emotions, we pave the way for our doom. A wrong decision may become our crucifixion, our covenant with unhappiness, with a state of inner misery that will last a lifetime.

And lo, some put aside *Kriya Yoga* forever, while others interrupt a course of studies and throw away a profession they had been dreaming for years for which they had fought and suffered. They do the same with a beloved, with friends, with their family itself. Nothing can stop them: the wise words of people near them have no power anymore. An indomitable internal strength wants to produce sheer calamity in their life. Sometimes we have the idea that a person wants only one thing: to affirm with stubbornness his "*right to pain and suffering*" – the last is an expression of *the Mother,* main disciple and companion of *Sri Aurobindo*.

The destructive effects of yielding to this force remind those of an asteroid falling through the atmosphere on its way to fire and destruction. So, there is a reasonable hope that the completion of the Incremental Routines save one from

being a victim of this havoc, having built an almost automatic reflex of not being influenced or guided by frantic emotions.

Many *kriyabans* break some important human relationships because they assume that their religious choices are criticized. Sometimes a breakup of a relationship is unavoidable, other times it is a great loss especially if it is the product of the orgasm of pride. Many times people are annoyed by sincere and constructive criticism as if it was a useless display of cruelty. They believe the other counterpart provokes sadistically enervating discussions with inappropriate topics.

Sometimes kriyabans are too prideful to accept other "uninitiated" people's commons sense. On the contrary, it is necessary to listen to other people's opinion, especially if it comes from our family or from all people who love us. Those who have become prey of destructive cults, have not listened anyone's opinion. The more the criticism has sound basis, the more one feels as if they were swallowing a black, sharp-edged rock.

A kriyaban who believes they are following their heart but who is actually just venting their most violent frustrations, can, on this occasion, reject any discussion and break off a relationship lasting a lifetime with an action of such "radiant" free will as to overwhelm all bystanders. Several days go by and their heart feels heavy; the subtle deception of the mind creates the firm belief that any saint, any true mystic would have acted in the same way. They want to believe that beneath their action there was an almost sacred motive, linked with destiny and karma.

If the risk of retracing one's steps appears, pride will prevail, driving the presently exciting pleasure of freedom to the top. This emotion -- which is perhaps a sadistic satisfaction in disguise -- makes existence to be as beautiful as ever, just like being reborn after a long and painful malady. Wisdom has no chance of prevailing. A strange frenzy fills the mind of our kriyaban, making even the most trivial activity enjoyed with uninterrupted voluptuousness, surrounded by flashes of blue. Yet a pain in their heart remains, despite the rosiest projects. A good crumb of their spiritual aspiration is trapped in a past that can no longer be reached due to their unwillingness to endure the full impact of a truthful and honest reminiscence. Wounded pride is an emotion that suffocates.

CHAPTER 10
TRIBHANGAMURARI SCHOOL

[I] *How this school faces the Second level of Kriya: macro movement Tribhangamurari*
[II] *Incremental Routine of the macro movement Tribhangamurari*
[III] *How this school faces the Third level of Kriya: micro movement Tribhangamurari*
[IV] *Incremental Routine of the micro movement Tribhangamurari, to be completed in the last part of life*

[I] How this school faces the Second level of Kriya: macro movement Tribhangamurari

In this school the *First level of Kriya* corresponds more or less to what has been described in chapters 6 and 7. The *Second level* corresponds to the three techniques with the *Macro movement Tribhangamurari*: *Amantrak, Samantrak* and *Thokar* (this *Thokar* is different from what was described in the preceding chapter 9.) The *Third level* corresponds to the introduction of the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari*. A *Fourth level* is not taken into account. At its place, a hint is given to a spontaneous meditation on the calm *Prana* in *Sahasrara.*

This is a wonderful way of conceiving the *Second Stage* of *Kriya Yoga*. It is usually taught in three separate sessions. The *Macro movement Tribhangamurari* is perceived first by simply moving one's breath and awareness along a prescribed path, then this perception happens in the state of tranquil breath and is accompanied by the *Vasudeva Mantra.* At the end this perception is reinforced through the help of the movements of the head. By repeating this procedure, going up from *Muladhara* to the head and coming down following the three-curved path *Tribhangamurari* (*Tri-banga-murari* = form with three curves) each *Chakra* is pierced.

[I.1] Amantrak

Start a deep, very long inhalation. Your tongue is stable in *Kechari Mudra* or at least in *baby Kechari.* Very slowly raise *Prana* and awareness through the spinal channel, from *Muladhara* to the *Sikha* point (*Bindu*) – half a minute is required. Do not pause in any *Chakra*. Then start a deep

exhalation. Let *Prana* and awareness come slowly downwards along the *Tribhangamurari* path and reach *Muladhara*. Another half minute is required.

The *Tribhangamurari* path starts from *Bindu*, goes up to the left of a very short length, then descends toward the right side of the body. Once a particular point in the back (5-6 centimeters above the right nipple) is reached, it curves and moves leftwards to cross the heart knot. After reaching a point in the back that is 5-6 centimeters under the left nipple, it changes its direction again and points toward *Muladhara*.

The 3 procedures *Amantrak, Samantrak* and *Tribhangamurari Thokar* are not intended to be tested simultaneously. You would tend to practice it not at the full of your capacities. The only effect could be of imprinting indelibly on your mind a wrong way of conceiving the practice.

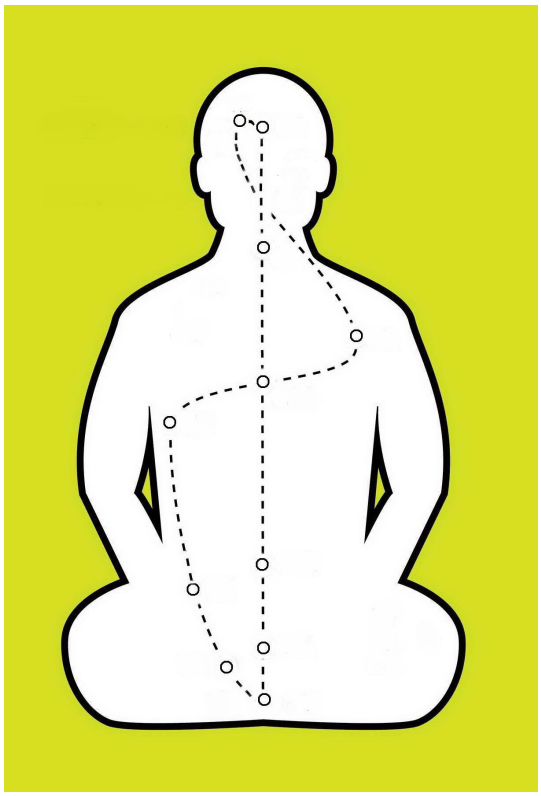


Figure 13. Tribhangamurari path as seen from the back

We call this technique *Amantrak,* which means "without the use of a *Mantra.*" The traditional teaching is addressed to expert *kriyabans* who can make their breath subtle and long, very long. It is possible to make a round of *Amantrak* last one minute. If you experience it in a shorter time, let us say 40 seconds, it does not mean that your practice is wrong. However, resolve to do your best to lengthen your breath.

Let us underly the most important aspect of this procedure. Its essence consists in constant intensification of the mental pressure along the whole circuit. Consider the action of squeezing an almost empty tube of toothpaste to get the last bit out. This gives you an idea of the quantity of mental pressure you have to apply during this procedure. If you utilize a great strength of concentration and will, there is no limit to the increase of the internal energetic flow along the *Tribhangamurari* path.

As for the routine, some teachers give this counsel: "For two weeks, repeat this technique 25 times, once a day. Then for another two weeks repeat it 50 times once a day; then for another two weeks 75 times and so on up to 200 times each day for two weeks. Only at this point you are supposed to practice the following *Samantrak* instruction."

Another more quick option is this: "For a couple of months repeat this technique 36 times, once a day, then start to practice the following technique."

[I.2] Samantrak

Samantrak means: "with the use of a *Mantra.*" Now the breath is free. forget it wholly.

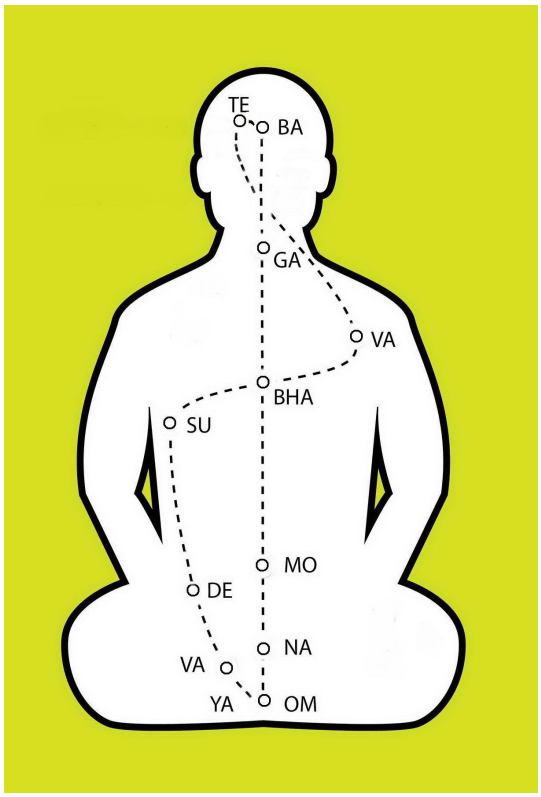


Figure 14. Tribhangamurari path, enriched with the syllables of the Mantra

The syllables *Om*, *Na*, *Mo*, *Bha, Ga,* are vibrated into the first five *Chakras, Ba* in *Bindu. Teee* (with prolonged eee …) is chanted in the center in left part of the brain. The syllables *Va, Su, De, Va* are put in the four new centers outside the spine; *Ya* is vibrated in *Muladhara*.

These five new centers are five "vortexes" inside the main flow of the current – they are not a new set of *Chakras*. Each syllable when vibrated is like a mental *Thokar* (hit): since the technique is performed slowly, there is plenty of time to make this stimulation very effective.

We have now described one round of *Samantrak*, which lasts one minute. If you realize it is shorter, let us say 45/50 seconds, make a resolution to reach the exact timing.

Remember what we have recommended while introducing *Amantrak*. Now, the essence of this particular procedure consists in utilizing the vibration of the 12 syllables to encourage a more keen intensification of the mental pressure along the whole circuit.

During two weeks repeat this technique 25 times, once a day. Then during another two weeks repeat it 50 times, once a day; then 75 times and so on up to 200 times each day for two weeks. This numbers must be respected. Then you are ready to practice the *Tribhangamurari form of Thokar*.

Don't be in a hurry!
The *Tribhangamurari* techniques have the power to create a permanent transformation in your attitude towards *Kriya* by making you acquainted with a mostly unknown ecstatic state while fully living the experience of life.

The *Mantra*'s syllables, which are put with care like seeds in each center will change your mood. It is like turning on various lights along the three-curved path. Sun and clear skies finally entered your practice.

Some students try to relish right away the power of *Thokar Tribhangamurari* by a desultory, system-less experimentation of *Amantrak* and *Samantrak*, far from abiding by the given rules. What could be the real impact of the *Thokar-Tribhangamurari* technique remains unknown and not even vaguely foreshadowed. First of all you create in your body the perception of a particular internal movement. The *Thokar* along it should

be applied only when this energetic flow is well printed in your consciousness.

[I.3] Thokar Tribhangamurari

Forget the breath or start with a very subtle breath. The hands (with interlocked fingers) are placed on the navel area so as to push the abdominal region upward, thus creating a physical pressure on the first three *Chakras*. Starting with the chin on the chest, move the energy and awareness very slowly along the spinal column from *Muladhara* to *Bindu*. Your chin comes slowly up following the inner movement. "Touch" internally each *Chakra* with the syllables of the *Mantra* (*Om* is placed in the first *Chakra*, *Na* in the second ...). When energy and awareness are at *Bindu,* the chin is parallel to the ground.

Now the descent of the energy begins. The movement of the head follows millimeter by millimeter its downward energetic flow along the *Tribhangamurari* path, crossing the heart *Chakra*. All this happens in a fluid way and within 30 seconds or less. The following description of the movements of the head may seem complicated at first but with a minimum of patience, the right movement of the head will be learned: you need only to understand that it is conceived in the most logical and effective way of intensifying a particular snakelike downward flow of the energy. Let us now begin to describe the movements of the head. [9]

Without turning the face, bend your head sideways a couple of centimeters to the left. Return to the middle raising the chin. Remain only an instant in this position, with the chin raised and slowly turn the face to the right and as far as possible. Only the face moves, not the torso. During this SLOW movement the inner flow of energy moves from *Bindu* to the point in the back of the right side of the body. Realize how this simple movement accompanies perfectly the descent of energy.

Here the first of five psycho-physical blows happens: the chin touches the right shoulder for an instant and the syllable *Va* is vibrated in the eighth center. The shoulder also makes a small upward motion to make contact with the chin easier. But be careful: if you feel you're forcing it, STOP! Those who are not able to have this contact with the right shoulder, should content themselves with coming as close to the shoulder as possible and stimulate the eighth center with sheer mental strength.

[9] What is essential is: do not be influenced by the dynamics of the technique of classic *Thokar* learned in Chapter 9!

Then the face turns very slowly to the left, accompanying, millimeter by millimeter, the internal flow of energy from the eighth to the ninth center, and crossing the fourth *Chakra.* If possible, place the chin over the left shoulder. The second blow takes place when the syllable *Su* is vibrated in the ninth center and the chin for an instant touches the left shoulder, which makes a small motion upward to make contact with the chin easier.

Two more blows happen when the syllables *De* and *Va* are put in the tenth and eleventh centers. The procedure is the following: the chin slowly moves toward the middle of the chest while grazing the left collarbone. During this movement, two light blows are given to the left collarbone in intermediate positions. The blows are given of course in the moment in which the syllables of the *Mantra* are vibrated. Finally, a last blow is given on the chest (central position) when the syllable *Ya* is vibrated in *Muladhara*.

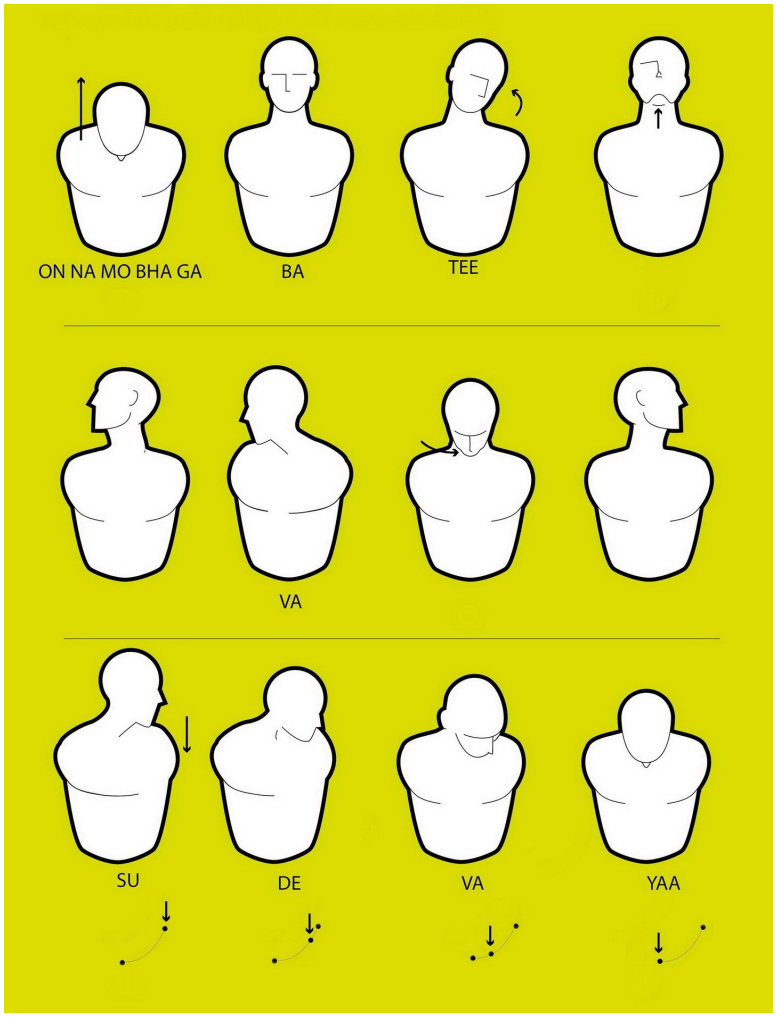


Figure 15. Thokar Tribhangamurari as seen from the front

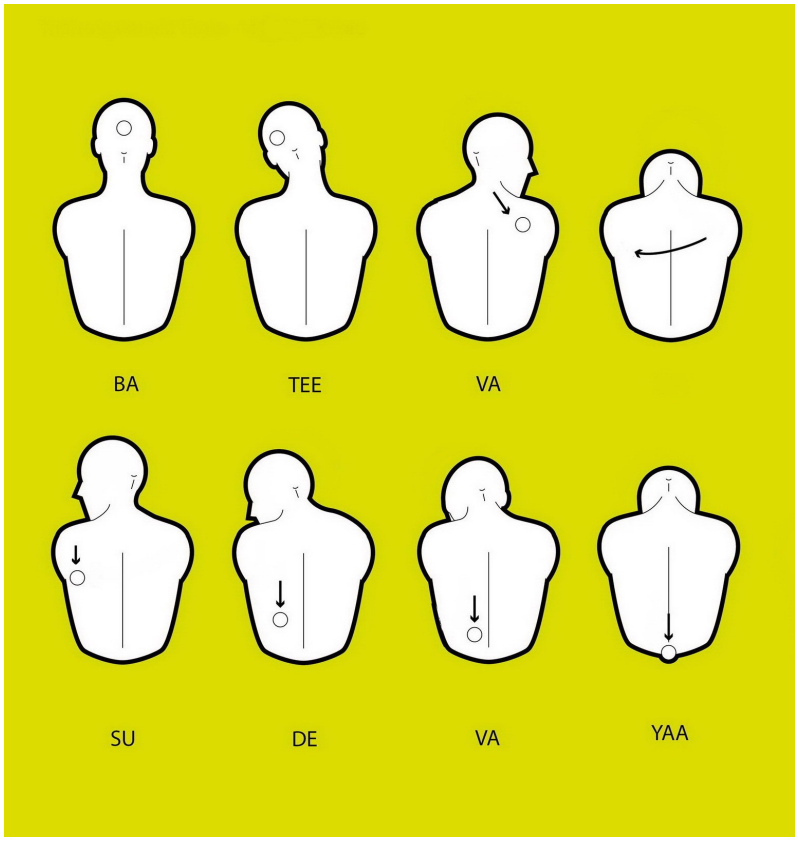


Figure 16. The same movements (only the descent) as seen from the back

I hope it is clear that the essence of this particular procedure consists in utilizing the movements of the head (with the five strokes) to encourage a further intensification of the mental pressure along the whole circuit.

Repeat the procedure 36 times. After completing the programmed number of rounds, calm the system with a minimal practice of *Samantrak*, then relax by practicing a simple *mental Pranayama*.

The supervision of an expert helps to avoid any problems – I am referring to stress and pain in the cervical vertebrae and in the muscles of the neck. Abrupt movements should be avoided; instead use a deep intensity of mental concentration. For the first couple of weeks do not practice every day but every two or three days.

NOTE
Through this procedure, the *Tribhangamurari* flow is intensified by specific movements of the head. The problem is that many *kriyabans* focus all the attention on giving the strokes and don't understand the value of creating mental pressure along each millimeter of the path.

We have started with perceiving the movement sensation coming up along the spine and coming down along a three curved path. Then with *Samantrak* procedure we have reinforced the perception of the 12 centers. Now it is necessary to feel that the movements of the head accompany perfectly, millimeter after millimeter, the flow of the internal current. Now we can try to intensify the perception of the internal flow by creating a mental pressure along each part of it. We utilize the movements of our head to "touch with pressure" each millimeter of the path, up and down. The chin is to be moved slowly as we are striving to win a strong resistance. We have suggested the idea: "like squeezing with a pencil an almost empty tube of toothpaste to get the last little bit out. "

[II] Incremental Routine of the macro movement Tribhangamurari

As soon as possible, begin the incremental routine of this procedure by practicing: 36x2, 36x3,….. 36x35, 36x36. Be careful to allow always one week to elapse between one stage and the next. I recommend this routine as a very important feat. A minimum of 8-10 months is required to complete it.

While *Amantrak* and *Samantrak* are practiced every day, the *Incremental* sessions of *Thokar-Tribhangamurari* are practiced once a week (the other days one can, however, practice up to 36 repetitions.) A *kriyaban* must have had all the time necessary to metabolize the subconscious material that the strong action exerted upon *Muladhara* brings to the surface.

One begins with 36 rounds; a week later one practices 36x2, then 36x3 ... and finally 36x36 repetitions. This means 1296 rounds! Can you imagine the powerful effects of this action? 1296 means that you begin in the morning and end in the night, doing again and again the same action. There is no doubt that you'll succeed in opening the door of *Sushumna*! Of course you have prepared this experience by practicing 36x35, and before that 36x34.... And don't forget that you have practiced *Amantrak* and *Samantrak* for months!

[III] How this school faces the Third level of Kriya: micro movement Tribhangamurari

We shall discuss here the way of conceiving the *Third Stage of Kriya Yoga* as it is taught by the "*Tribhangamurari*" schools. You have to focus on *Kutastha* while, at the same time, perceiving a micro-movement *Tribhangamurari* in the seat of each *Chakra.*

This procedure reminds the teaching of Swami Hariharananda. He taught us to contact the *Omkar* reality in its manifestations of sound, light and movement or swinging sensation. The swinging sensation of the *Omkar* reality had a central place in his teaching. [10]

The books of *Yoga* explain the importance of feeling the energy moving throughout the body, for example rising from the *Muladhara* along the spine or, as Sri Aurobindo explained, coming down from the high and infused in the body. Swami Hariharananda on the contrary hinted at a feeling of movement or better of oscillation within each *Chakra*.

Perceiving an oscillation inside each *Chakra* is not exactly like perceiving the *Tribhangamurari* form in small dimensions, however the effects are, more or less, the same. The state of "absorption" created by having this particular perception in each *Chakra* has no comparison. Only few *Kriya* schools have disclosed the nature of this micro-movement and revealed its importance. Unfortunately, many people seek frantically impossible surrogates for it!

[III.1] Micro movement Tribhangamurari

After a minimum of 12 rounds of *Thokar Tribhangamurari,* you learn now to experience the movement *Tribhangamurari* in smaller dimensions inside the 12 centers of the *Macro Tribhangamurari* path.

Through a short inhalation, raise the *Prana* from the *Muladhara Chakra* into the spiritual eye between your eyebrows. Gently lower your chin, hold your breath and look "down" at the *Muladhara Chakra.* Visualize it as a horizontal disk, having a diameter of approximately one inch. On that disk perceive the *Tribhangamurari* movement in reduced dimensions.

[10] I remember that during his meeting with devotees he touched the head and the chest of some of them, vibrating his hand, trying to transmit a feeling as of a "oscillation."

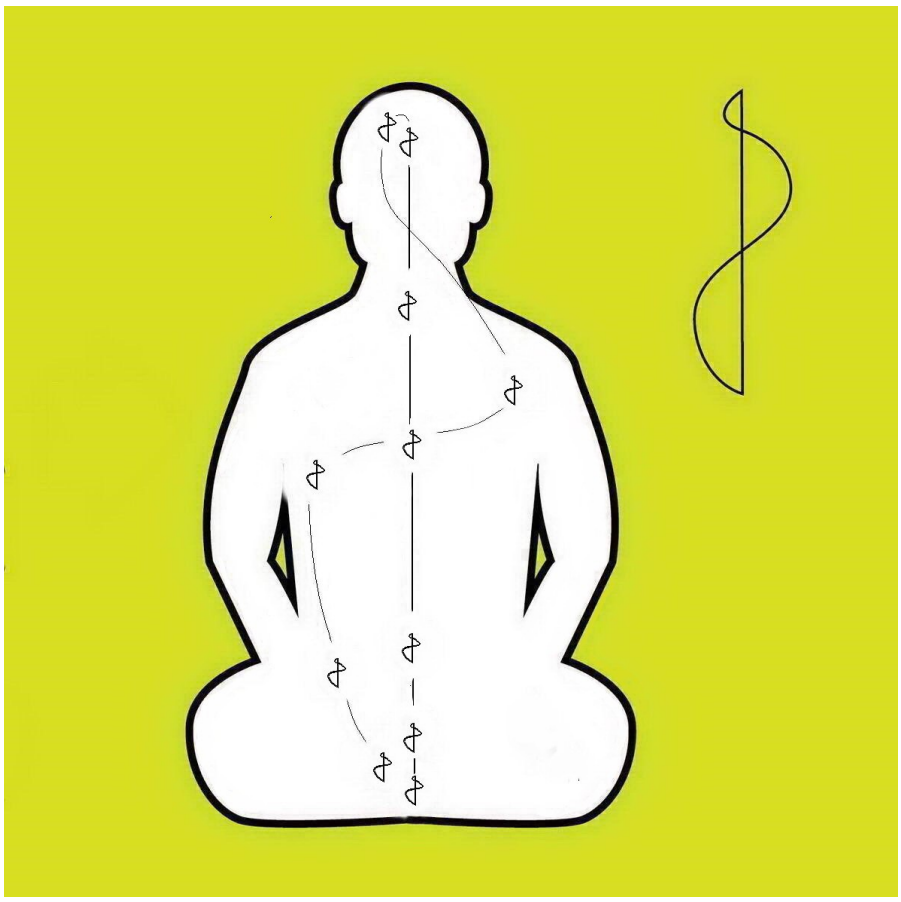


Figure 17. Tribhangamurari micro movement in each of the 12 centers

Don't worry about the required time: it may be short, it may be long …. it doesn't matter. Exert a moderate but continuous pressure on the disk as if you had a pen and were drawing a clear continuous mark. Repeat two more times. Your breath is held effortlessly; the *Prana* remains totally in *Ajna Chakra*. After three perceptions of the Micro movement, you can relax and let *Prana* come down. A subtle exhalation happens but you may not be aware of it.

Move to the second *Chakra* and repeat the same procedure. Repeat it for *Chakras* 3, 4, 5, then for *Bindu*, then for the five new centers and finally for *Muladhara*.

This is round 1: practice two more rounds. Be faithful to this practice for at least three months before starting to increase the mental pressure upon each center employing the syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra.*

[III.2] Micro movement Tribhangamurari utilizing the Mantra

In my opinion, this technique is the highest procedure contained in this second part of the book. It contains a mystery of Unworldly Beauty

Among the debris of past illusions, such experience open the doors of the spiritual realization. This internal movement embodies the deeper aspect of the *Omkar* reality. Perceiving it means to annihilate any form of duality present in the *Chakras* and therefore, in your awareness. It is as if the center between the eyebrows become one with each lower *Chakra*, fusing them in a unique reality. This will lead you out of time and space. A burning aspiration towards the Divine is born from this.

Practice *Kechari Mudra*. Through a short inhalation, raise the *Prana* from the *Muladhara Chakra* into the spiritual eye between your eyebrows. Forget the breath and look "down" at the *Muladhara Chakra.* Mentally utter the syllables "*Om-Na-Mo-Bha-Ga-Ba-Te-Va-Su-De-Va-Ya*". Do this *Japa* without hurry. Perceive the micro-movement *Tribhangamurari* and realize how the mental chant of the 12 syllables add a greater "pressure" to it.

Remain immobile with no movement at all of the spinal column or of the head. Here all the power of pressure has to be obtained with the sheer repetition of the syllables of the *Mantra*. These syllables are like mini "thrusts" or "pulsations".

The duration of one round is determined by the speed of the chanting of the *Mantra.* For many people, the chanting of the *Mantra* and consequently, the micro-movement lasts about 10-12 seconds. Remember that Lahiri Mahasaya's recommendation was "Don't be in a hurry!" Observe the difference between going slowly and with speed. If you go slowly, you will perceive a tremendous power.

Repeat the *Vasudeva Mantra* three times. *Prana* remains totally in the head. After three perceptions of the micro-movement, repeat the same procedure in *Chakras* 2, 3, 4, 5, then in *Bindu*, then in the five centers outside the spine, and finally in *Muladhara*. This is one round: practice 3-12 rounds. At the end of this practice, remain with the awareness centered in the light that you will perceive in the upper part of your head. If you have proceeded without hurry you will get a state that can defined "beyond time."

If, after the completion of the practice, you find the time to lie down supine (*Savasana*) you will get a particular state of physical and mental

immobility where the *Kundalini* energy can climb up to the *Chakra* of the heart while the *Kutastha* will reveal itself.

[IV] Incremental Routine of the micro movement Tribhangamurari, to be completed in the last part of life

When I received this instruction I was told that, analogously to the *Yoni Mudra* which is practiced every night at the moment a *kriyaban* prepares to withdraw his awareness from the body and from the physical world and gets ready for sleep – which is a "small death" – the *Micro movement Tribhangamurari Incremental Routine* is like a peaceful return to the origin – a preparation to "die forever" – meaning to become forever free in Spirit. It was explained to me that this last *Incremental Routine*, besides being the best preparation for the conscious exit out of the body at death (*Mahasamadhi*), burned forever the necessity of reincarnating. [11]

In *Micro-movement Incremental Routine* we have 36 sessions of practice. What's new is that the major part of this session requires more than one day.

On the first day you perceive 36 Micro-movements in each of the 12 centers. The second session requires that you perceive 36x2 Micro movements in each center. [You experience one single long round: 72 Micro movements in the first *Chakra* without interruption, then 72 in the second *Chakra*, and so on....] After some days, you face the third session with 36x3 Micro movements in each center. Then other days pass by. Then you have your 36x4 session which will fill up your whole day.

The next steps: 36x5, 36x6, 36x7, 36x8, will not only fill up a whole day but also part of the next day. Therefore you must divide your effort into two parts. What was heretofore never allowed now happens: you can sleep a whole night between the two parts which are considered one session. What is important is that you start more or less immediately on the morning of the next day. Therefore, you are not allowed to go to work and it is also recommended that you keep silent, avoiding any opportunity for

[11] As for what happens during the process of *Mahasamadhi*, we have heard many stories about possible "*Kriya* ways" of leaving the physical shell; obviously we cannot vouch for their authenticity. Some assert that the typical practice is *Thokar*, others hint at procedures happening entirely in *Kutastha.* We can reasonably assume that it is not always possible to perform the physical movement of *Thokar.* To focus one's awareness in the spine or at the point between the eyebrows may be the only thing possible. The most interesting thing I've heard is that some *kriyabans,* during the last weeks or months before leaving the body, practice only one technique: perceiving the *Micro-movement Tribhangamurari* nel *Kutastha*. At the moment of death, they merge with the Infinite through the same procedure.

conversation. (However, the use of common sense should always prevail; if addressed, a polite reply is always imperative.)

You can now understand that the following sessions require more days; the last session requires about 12 days! Let me describe what happens during the last session: you perceive 36x36 micro movements in each center! This means: 1296 micro movements in *Muladhara*, 1296 in *Swadhistan*.... and so on, ending after some days in *Muladhara* with 1296 movements.

Let me emphasize that one should never skip over a stage. Don't think, "On my next Summer holidays I'm going to find a dozen days to practice 36x36." No! It does not work in this way. Before perceiving the Micro movement 36x36 times in each center you must have perceived it 36x35 times. And before this, you should have perceived it 36x34 times, and so on....

Completing this *Incremental Routine* is really a giant achievement. Many splendid experiences will happen and the last internal obstacles will be cleared one after another. When you have completed your practice, you discover that you cannot describe it because the bliss experienced has totally effaced from your memory the modalities of your experience.

A *kriyaban* should make every effort to create the opportunity to grant himself the joy and the privilege of completing the recommended number of repetitions without every yielding to the temptation of hurried practices.

CHAPTER 11
OMKAR SCHOOL

[I] *Their way of facing the First level of Kriya*
[II] *Their way of facing the Second level of Kriya*
[III] *Their way of facing the Third level of Kriya: advanced form of Jyoti Mudra*
[IV] *Their way of facing the Fourth level of Kriya*

The *Omkar* school (I am referring to the *Kriya* school originating from *Swami Harihara*nanda) is a fantastic way to deepen the practice of *Kriya*. *Swami Harihara*nanda has explained us that the *Omkar* reality reveals as Sound, Light and Movement sensation. This was indeed a great revelation. I am thankful for what I have learned at the feet of this Teacher. I am also thankful to a pair of his disciples as well – they have helped me to reason.

NOTE
In the following techniques the tongue is in the position that I usually call "*baby Kechari Mudra*."

[I] Their way of facing the First level of Kriya

In this school the *First level of Kriya* is different from the one adopted by the schools we have described up to now.

First Kriya routine
Maha Mudra in two parts (Forward bendings and Maha Mudra proper)
Kriya Pranayama
Jyoti Mudra
Paravastha

Because of its great beauty I have already introduced (Chapter 7) their way of teaching *Forward bendings* and *Maha Mudra.* Now I complete the presentation of the techniques of the *First Kriya*.

[I.1] Kriya Pranayama

With eyes closed, deeply inhale into *Fontanelle*. Then exhale into *Ajna*. Hold breath for few seconds (3-4) then inhale up to *Fontanelle*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then exhale to *Vishuddha*, hold for a few seconds

then inhale to *Fontanelle*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then exhale to *Anahata* ... and so on. At a certain point you have reached the *Muladhara*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then inhale to *Fontanelle*.

Now repeat in reverser order. Exhale down from *Fontanelle* to *Muladhara*. Hold your breath for few seconds. Then inhale to *Fontanelle*, hold your breath. Then exhale down to *Swadhisthana Chakra* ...pause... inhale... and so on until you exhale down from *Fontanelle* to *Ajna*. This is one cycle (12 breaths). You can repeat the whole cycle for a couple of times.

During the pause between inhalation and exhalation (the awareness is in *Fontanelle*) the breath should be held 2 to 3 seconds, but after several weeks of *Pranayama*, the time of each pause can be gradually increased up to 30 seconds. This detail is very important to create a deeper calmness.

Jyoti Mudra

Close your ears with your thumbs while with the index fingers press lightly at the corners of the eyes or covering your eyes with a small pressure. Focus on *Kutastha*. Allow that part of your attention goes down in the *Muladhara*. Then ideally lift this *Chakra* through an inhalation to the point between the eyebrows. Hold the breath for as long as you feel comfortable (about 10 -15 sec) while trying to perceive the particular light of *Muladhara* in *Kutastha*. Exhale and ideally place *Muladhara Chakra* back down to its original position. Part of the attention moves now on the second Chakra. Then do exactly what you have done with the *Muladhara Chakra*. Then thanks to a short exhalation, this Chakra is ideally brought back into its seat...

The same happens to the *Chakras* 3, 4, 5 and *Medulla.* Always try to see the light at the point between the eyebrows. Feel that you are offering each center to the light of the spiritual eye. To end the procedure, put the palms of your hands over the eyelids and remain there seeing a white Light for 2-3 min. When the Light disappears, lower your hands.

Paravastha

Paravastha is the state ensuing a good practice of *Kriya*. Remain longer in meditation listening to divine Sound, feeling the vibration and enjoying the divine Light. Perceive the focus of your concentration slowly rising from *Kutastha* to *Fontanelle* and above *Fontanelle* outside of the body. Remain without thoughts perceiving this inner sky which starts from the upper part of your head. When you come to the end of your meditation routine, open your eyes. Stare at what is before you but do not observe anything in particular. Watch without watching. Keep 99% of your attention to

Fontanelle. After a while you will become aware of a subtle line of white Light, softened, as a fog, around all objects. The Light will become progressively white and greater. Avoid thinking. Keep the gaze fix. After 5 minutes close your eyes and rest for awhile before standing.

[II] Their way of facing the Second level of Kriya

[II.1] Second Kriya formal part

The hands, with fingers intertwined, rest on the abdomen. Inhalation and exhalation are fragmented into 6 + 6 parts. Starting with your chin on the chest, inhale, moving your awareness upwards along the spinal column. Simultaneously, slowly raise the chin as if to accompany the energy and push the energy up. The syllables of the *Vasudeva Mantra* (*Om Namo Bhagavate Vasudevaya*) are mentally placed in each *Chakra* location, while making a short pause in each. During the first "sip" of inhalation, the concentration is on the *Muladhara*, where the syllable *Om* is ideally "put"; during the second "sip", the concentration is on the second *Chakra*, where the syllable *Na* is ideally put … *Mo* in the third, *Bha* in the fourth, *Ga* in the fifth and *Ba* in *Bindu* (*medulla* is not ideally hit.*)* Now the inhalation is completed and the chin is horizontal.

Hold the breath and practice *Kechari Mudra* as best as you can. The head bends forward towards the throat cavity: the divine Light flows down from above into the occipital region of the brain (therefore in the part of your head that is turned towards the ceiling.) After feeling this for a second or more, resume the normal position and immediately bend the head slightly toward the left shoulder, without turning the face. The previous experience of the divine Light infusion happens again in the right part of the head.

Resume the normal position and bend the head slightly backwards: the experience of divine Light happens in the frontal part of the head. Then bend your head toward the right shoulder... the experience of divine Light happens in the left part of the head. Close the round by repeating the first movement.

After concluding one rotation of the head, exhalation starts. The exhaling breath is divided into six punctuated parts or pulses. While lowering the chin at a slow pace, the awareness comes down along the spinal column. The syllable *Te* (usually is the final "e" is lengthened: *Teeee*) is placed in *Medulla*, *Va* in the fifth *Chakra*… and so on … *Su*… *De*… *Va*, until *Ya* (lengthened: *Yaaaa*) is mentally chanted in the *Muladhara*. If this is comfortable make a short pause after exhalation. During it, the awareness makes a complete, counter-clockwise turn around the *Muladhara Chakra*.

What I have described is called by me *Omkar Pranayama* – in order to avoid saying: "*Second Kriya formal part.*"

The timing of one *Omkar Pranayama* depends on the individual: usually it is approximately 45-50 seconds but from a certain point onwards, the speed of each repetition of *Omkar Pranayama* slows down. The breath is "sucked in" and seems to be dissolved. From that moment onwards, all the physical details are only hinted.

You have probably read that in a deep *Pranayama*, the energy crosses the *Chakras* just like the thread of a necklace passes through the pearls. It may also happen that the "thread" of energy envelops each "pearl". The counter clockwise rotation of awareness around the crown (induced by the experience of Light coming down from above) can be also perceived in small dimensions winding around the *Medulla*.

When exhalation begins and you mentally chant *Teeee*, you can use the starting instants of exhalation to intensify the psychic pressure around the *Medulla*. This internal action is extended in a natural way to the other *Chakras.* The path of descent becomes a "helix" that surrounds and creates pressure around each *Chakra*. Go slowly and do not be in a hurry and let the process proceed at its own pace.

[II.2] Second Kriya informal part

The breath is natural (as in *mental Pranayama.*) In each *Chakra* we shall mentally repeat its associated syllable many, many times. In *Muladhara* repeat *Om, Om, Om, Om, Om*... about 36 times. (Do not use *Mala* to count – remain immobile.) The speed at which you chant the syllables is about two per second. Visualize that *Chakra* as a horizontal disk, having a diameter of approximately one inch. Visualize these syllables moving on the surface of the disk in counterclockwise direction, near the circumference.

Then focus on the second *Chakra* where you will do exactly the same action, utilizing the second syllable of the *Mantra*, namely: *Na, Na, Na, Na, Na...* about 36 times. Then focus on the third, repeating *Mo, Mo, Mo, Mo, Mo*.... about 36 times. Then focus on the fourth, repeating *Bha, Bha, Bha, Bha, Bha* ... then on the fifth (*Ga, Ga, Ga, Ga, Ga*), then on *Bindu* (*Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba, Ba*).

Now practice the five bents of the head but in a slower way.

The chin bends forward, towards the throat cavity: the divine Light flows down from above the head (seat of the Eternal Tranquility) into the occipital region of the brain. After feeling this for about 10-20 seconds,

resume the normal position and bend the head slightly toward the left shoulder, without turning the face. The previous experience of the divine Light infusion happens. Divine Light flows down from above the head into the right part of the brain. Remain in this position for about 10-20 seconds, then resume the normal position. Now the head bends backwards: the same experience happens and divine Light flows down into the frontal part of the brain. Remain in this position for about 10-20 seconds, then resume the normal position.

Now the head bends slightly toward the right shoulder, without turning the face. The same experience happens and divine Light flows down into the left part of the brain, then the spine and the body....
To close the round, the chin bends forward, towards the throat cavity: the same experience happens The head then resumes its normal position.

You have perceived Light and divine blessings in each of the four parts of your brain. In this way, the spiritual Light will gradually pervade each atom of the upper part of your head.

Then focus on *Medulla* repeating many times *Te, Te, Te, Te, Te* … The absorption state is really strong. Then you will focus on the fifth Chakra utilizing Va, Va, Va ….
...then fourth.... third …. second …. *Muladhara*.

Going up this way from *Muladhara* to *Bindu* and coming down repeating the same procedure is one round: the time required is approximately 4-6 minutes. Repeat 3-4 times and then be lost in the meditative state.

Key points

[1] Moving from one *Chakra* to the next, a *kriyaban* begins to notice the change of the light vibration in the region between the eyebrows. Later, you will have the experience that a specific sound comes from each center. Being absorbed in listening to astral sound creates inner bliss, putting aside – at least momentarily – our Ego consciousness. This is the moment when the *Omkar* reality is revealed.

[2] After completing this procedure, the upper part of the brain will remain ideally in the space, separated from the physical body. Swami Hariharananda said that this procedure ends in "cracking the coconut." The coconut is the head, whose upper part will be detached from the lower part. You must actively cooperate to reach this result. You must "invite" the divine energy to pervade the frontal, lateral and back part of your head.

During the day remain in this state as much as you can. Whenever you can

withdraw for a short meditation, tune yourself with the Sound, Light, formless power of the Divine rotating inside the cranium.

[II.3] Employment of the 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet

Swami Hariharananda took the decision of teaching a practice typical of the *Tantric Hatha Yoga.* It was taught for a certain number of years, later he put it aside. In my opinion it is interesting to give just a hint to it. This procedure is meant to help the seeker to perceive the Divine Energy in the *Chakras* and in the different parts of the body

In each Chakra

The 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet will be chanted visualizing the petals of each *Chakra*. There is no breath control.

Start with Hang Kshang in *Ajna Chakra*: Hang in the left hemisphere of the brain and Kshang in the right. Then place the 16 vowels in the *cervical Chakra* (Ang Aang Ing Iing Ung Uung Ring Rring Lring Llring Eng Aing Ong Oung Aung Ah) – you chant each letter only once, the same for all the following Chakras. In this practice you visualize each *Chakra* as a vertical disk radiating Divine Light through its petals. Visualize the number of petals assigned by *yogic* tradition in clockwise direction. Then place the first 12 consonants in *heart Chakra* (Kong Khong Gong Ghong Wong Chong Chhong Jong Jhong Neong Tong Thong), chant the following 10 in *Manipura* (Dong Dhong Nong Tong Thong Dong Dhong Noing Pong Phong), then the following 6 in *Swadhistan* (Bong Bhong Mong Jong Rong Long) and finally the last 4 in *Muladhara* (Vong Shhong Shong Song). In each *Chakra*, you start from upper left go down left and come up from the right part. Three cycles are recommended. Close repeating the two letters Hang Kshang in *Ajna*.

In the crown of the head

The 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet are spiraled around the cranium, activating the *Omkar* sound which is perceived in the center of the brain – in the so called "Cave of *Brahma*", the seat of the pituitary and of the pineal gland. You start from the back of the crown, begin with the vowels, then the consonants. Make all the tour counterclockwise, then repeat clockwise. Twelve couple of rotations (6+6) are recommended

The good effects of this procedure are easily to be perceived and therefore this procedure is perceived as "heaven sent."

In different parts of the body

The 50 letter-sounds of the Sanskrit alphabet are placed in the 50 parts in which the human body [according to the tantric tradition] can be divided.

No breath control. Put your hand on the different parts of your body that we shall describe, uttering distinctly at the same time the appropriate letter for that part.

1 ANG Forehead 2 AANG Mouth 3 ING Left eye 4 IING Right eye
5 UNG Left ear 6 UUNG Right ear 7 RING Left nostril 8 RRING Right nostril 9 LRING Left cheek 10 LLRING Right cheek 11 ENG Inner mouth (without touching) 12 AING Chin 13 ONG Upper lip and set of teeth
14 OUNG Lower lip and set of teeth 15 AUNG Forehead & top of head 16 AH Whole face (touching with both hands) 17 KONG Left shoulder
18 KHONG Left elbow 19 GONG Left wrist 20 GHONG Left knuckle 21 WONG Left finger joints 22 CHONG Right shoulder 23 CHHONG Right elbow 24 JONG Right wrist 25 JHONG Right knuckle 26 NEONG Right finger joints 27 TONG Left thigh joint 28 THONG Left knee 29 DONG Left ankle 30 DHONG Ball of the left foot 31 NONG Left toes 32 TONG Right thigh joint 33 THONG Right knee 34 DONG Right ankle 35 DHONG Ball of the right foot 36 NOING Right toes 37 PONG Left ribs 38 PHONG Right ribs 39 BONG Whole back (touch up and down) 40 BHONG Lower abdomen 41 MONG Upper abdomen 42 JONG Heart center 43 RONG Left shoulder 44 LONG Back of neck 45 VONG Right shoulder 46 SHHONG From left shoulder to right hand 47 SHONG From right shoulder to left hand 48 SONG From left shoulder to right foot 49 HAM From right shoulder to left foot 50 AKSHAM Moving down the front of the body

[III] Their way of facing the Third level of Kriya: advanced form of Jyoti Mudra

According to my understanding of Kriya this technique is the *Third level* of the *Omkar School*. However in the tradition it is called "*Jyoti Mudra Second Kriya*."

During this practice you contract (and then relax) the muscles near the physical location of each *Chakra*. The position of the hands and fingers for this Jyoti Mudra is the same as in First Kriya: you stick your thumbs in your ears with the index fingers covering your eyes.

Become aware of the *Muladhara Chakra*. Contract the muscles near *Muladhara*: the back part of the perineum. Then lift this *Chakra* through an

inhalation to *Kutastha*. Hold the breath for as long as you feel comfortable (about 10 -15 sec) while trying to perceive the particular Light of *Muladhara* in *Kutastha*. Relax the tension and exhale .

Then make a "leap of awareness" to the second *Chakra Swadhisthana* and contract the muscles of the sex organ and the sacrum. You can practice *Vairoli Mudra* (contract and relax both the urethral sphincter and the muscles of the back near the sacral center.) Then do exactly what you have done with the *Muladhara Chakra*...

When *Swadhisthana* is again in its initial position, place the focus of your awareness on the third *Chakra Manipura*. Tighten the muscles of the abdomen at the level of the navel: quickly contract and relax the navel, the abdominal muscles and the lumbar are of the spine. Then do exactly what you have done with the previous two *Chakras...*

Repeat the same scheme for *Anahata Chakra*. Expand the chest. Bring the shoulder blades together and concentrate on the spine near the heart. Feel the contraction of the muscles near the dorsal center. Then lift this Chakra through an inhalation to the point between the eyebrows. Hold etc.

Focus on the fifth *Chakra Vishuddha*. Move your head quickly from side to side (without turning your face) a couple of times, perceiving a grinding sound in the cervical vertebrae. This is only to localize the cervical center. Now contract the muscles of the back of the neck near the cervical vertebrae. To astrally locate Vishuddha Chakra we need a different procedure. Inhale from the cervical center without particular muscle concentration to Kutastha. Now, holding your breath, practice the five inclinations of the head:
a) turn the head to the left (the hands follow; the slight pressure upon ears and eyes does not change) the right elbow comes near the right breast,
b) turn the head to the right, the left elbow comes near the left breast,
c) return to the central position and bow the head forward;
d) bow the head back
e) then again in the front. Return to the normal position
Exhale from *Kutastha* to the *Vishuddha Chakra*.

For *Medulla* we have the following procedure. Inhale very slowly <u>from the base of the spine</u>. During this inhalation, contract the muscles at the base of the spine, then the muscles near the sex organ, then the muscles near the navel and near the *Manipura Chakra*, then contract the muscles near the dorsal center, near the region of the throat and, finally, clench your teeth and put wrinkles in the forehead. see the light at the point between the

eyebrows. Feel that you are offering your sixth center to God. Exhale and release the contraction.

For *Sahasrara Chakra* we have the following procedure. Inhale, contract all centers like we have done for *Ajna Chakra* then with teeth clenched, push the portion of your head which is above the eyebrows (cranium) up into the high heavens, offer it to God. Exhale, and release the contraction.

To end the procedure, put the palms of your hands over the eyelids and remain there seeing a milky white Light for 2-3 min. When the Light disappears, lower your hands and bow in the front and pray to the form of God you prefer. Open your eyes but remain concentrated inside, in the pituitary gland and see the divine Light in all things. Then enjoy *Paravastha* as in the *First Kriya*.

[IV] Their way of facing the Fourth level of Kriya

We have defined *Fourth Kriya* (See chapter 8) the meditation without action that happens in the upper part of the brain where the dimension of *static Prana* reigns. This Fourth level is here divided into six phases. There is always a minimum of action: only in the final state of *Samadhi* (the last of these six phases) there is properly no action.

[IV.1] Brain orbit – with physical movement

The breath is natural, not controlled. Practice *Kechari Mudra* to the best of your ability. Bend your head forward. Feel the energy present in the frontal region of your head and mentally vibrate *Bha* there. Without raising your chin to normal position, guide slowly your head in the position in which the head is bent toward the left shoulder – as if you try touching the left shoulder with your left ear. Feel the energy present in the left side of the brain (over your left ear) and mentally vibrate *Ga* there. From this position, guide slowly both your head and the flow of energy backwards in the occipital region of the brain. Mentally vibrate *Ba* there. Slowly guide your head in the position in which the head is bent toward the right shoulder – as if you try touching the right shoulder with the right ear. Mentally chant *Teee* on the right side of the brain (over your right ear.) Always feel the flow of energy moving to each position. Slowly return to initial position with the head bent forward. Mentally vibrate *Ba* there.

Now, slowly straighten your head and return with chin parallel to the ground while your attention moves toward the central part of your brain under *Fontanelle*. Mentally vibrate *Su* there. This completes the first round. Repeat this practice 12 times.

This rotation of energy is, by some teachers, called *Thokar Kriya.* The reason is that during this practice the energy moves *with pressure* through the brain substance. Reflect: *Thokar* has not the unique meaning of "*blow*" but also that of "*touching with pressure.*" This internal pressure, this friction, creates the Divine Light manifestation.

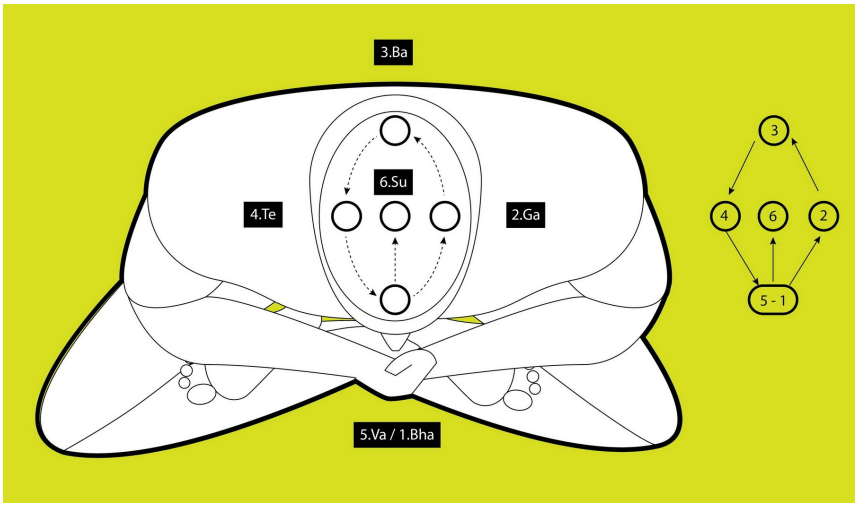


Figure 18. Circulation of calm Prana in the upper part of the brain

[IV.2] Brain orbit – immobility

After having completed the required number of rotations, it is not difficult to move to this last part in which the energetic movement happens in immobility.

Breath naturally. Repeat mentally, without hurry and without moving your head, the syllables *Bha, Ga, Ba, Te, Ba, Su* trying to perceive the same energetic movement you have previously induced. A ball of Light is turning inside your brain. After each round, this Light comes internally under *Fontanelle*. Practice about 36 rounds during each *Kriya* routine.

NOTE

These two last practices create a very strong effect. In a merciless way you become aware of the ego's subtle tricks that drive human actions. The reason for many wrong decisions appears with a definitive clarity, free of all covering veils. The ego is a very complicated mental structure: it is not possible to destroy it, but it can be made transparent. There is a price to pay: there might appear (hours after the practice) inexplicable waves of fear, the sensation of not knowing where you are and where you are directed to. This is a natural reaction coming from some subtle layers of the brain you have touched.

If you feel unfocused or spacey – as if you were under the influence of drugs, experiencing a state of too much *detachment* from the world and from *worldly things* – then it is wise to complete the practice with some repetitions of *Second Kriya*, both the formal part of it (6 repetitions) and the informal part (3 repetitions.)

[IV.3] Brain orbit – comprehensive practice

This practice is the happy crowning of the effort done with the two previous techniques. It makes the cosmic sound of *Om* to naturally rise and be perceived by your enchanted awareness. You will listen only to this. Therefore the mental chanting of *Bha Ga Ba Te Va Su* is of no utility. The same will happen with the following three last procedures. You will focus only upon *Omkar* sound and won't need any *Mantra* chanting.

Focus on *Muladhara*. Inhale deeply and ideally lift this *Chakra* in the central part of the brain, under *Fontanelle*, over *Ajna Chakra*. Visualize that *Chakra* as a disk, large as the circulation of energy that you have previously created.

Feel that the air is squeezed from the abdomen and stored in the upper part of the lungs. Hold your breath and start to put into motion the rotation of the energy in the head just as you have learned to do previously. The rotation of the energy happens in the head but, at the same time, it happens also around the real location of the *Muladhara Chakra* at the base of the spine. Hence, two rotations of energy happen at the same time: it seems difficult but it will become natural. [Remember also that at the end of each circle, the flow of energy is directed inside toward its center.]

The ideal number of rotations associated with each *Chakra* is 36 but a beginner is contented with a smaller number. Usually the need to breathe will disappear. Exhale when you need to exhale and guide the *Muladhara Chakra* back to its location at the base of the spine.

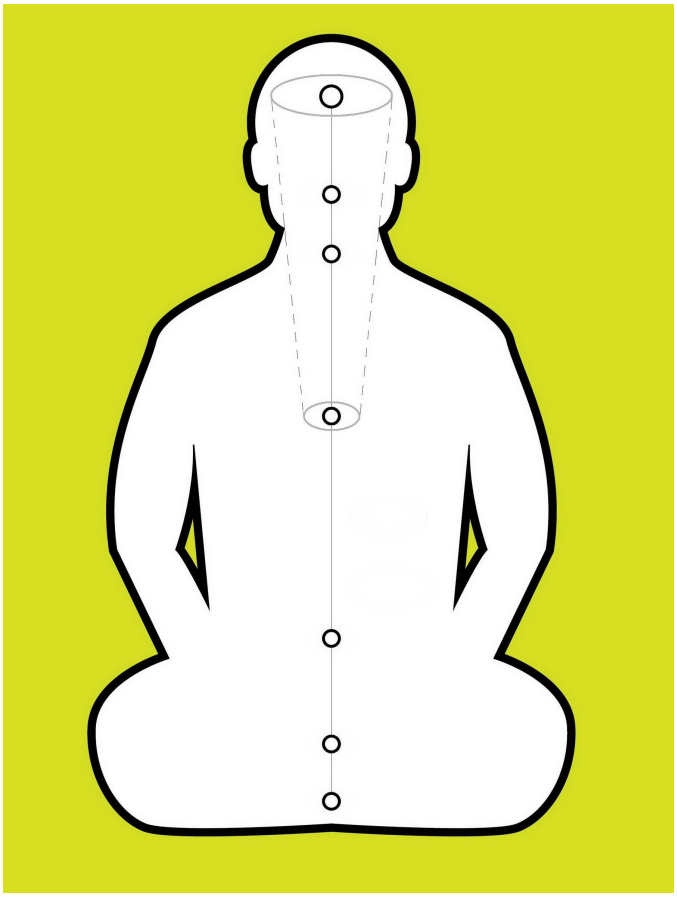


Figure 19. This is the moment in which the Fourth Chakra is lifted. You see the circulation of energy in the upper part of the head and, at the same time, around the heart Chakra

Inhale raising the second *Chakra* and repeat the procedure. Repeat the procedure for each *Chakra* up to *Ajna.* Repeat it again for *Ajna* and then for all the other *Chakras* down to *Muladhara*. The practice ends by breathing freely, putting all the attention in the *Fontanelle*. Peace, internal joy, breathless state, listening to internal sounds, perceiving the spiritual Light... this is what you will experience. Your practice of *Kriya* will become a love story with Beauty itself. Be sure, be confident: after a certain period of time, a remarkable experience of *Kundalini* awakening will happen. It will overcome you when you rest in the supine position. Without experiencing any start of surprise, you will find yourself ferried from a sweet dream to an authentic heaven; you will return to daily life with tears in your eyes – tears born of endless devotion.

When you master this procedure – when effortless *Kumbhaka* stabilizes and you are able to experience 36 (complete) rotations of *Prana* in your brain for each *Chakra*, namely 432 rotations of energy during 12 *Kumbhaka* – then you will perceive the entire universe filled with the effulgence of Divine Light. The effect is that during the day, a state of never before experienced clarity of mind will surprise you. The foundation

of your consciousness will be perceived as a continuous joy, having no reason whatsoever.

NOTE
It is perfectly natural to approach this practice by slightly rotating your head (and also by mentally chanting the six syllables of the *Mantra*.) Although this is not required, this might be useful for beginners. If this happens, try to move gradually toward physical immobility and toward listening to actual *Omkar* Sound.

[IV.4] Dissolve the breath in Brahmaloka

The *8th Chakra* is the door that puts you in contact with your astral body. Its opening involves the cleansing of what holds you to the cycle of death and rebirth, namely worn-out psychological patterns. It is the center of spiritual compassion and spiritual selflessness. A *kriyaban* who realizes the essence of this *Chakra* becomes completely selfless and lives with compassion rather than judgment.

Some *Kriya* or *Kundalini Yoga* teachers explain that this *Chakra* is located 5-6 cm. over Fontanelle. Other locations are given: 8 cm., 30 cm., 60 cm. We must trust our perception. Let us sweetly swing our trunk and head from side to side with the focus of attention over our head until we feel this *Chakra*. That is the right location!

Inhale, slowly drawing *Prana* from *Muladhara* to the *8th Chakra*. During this procedure, don't focus on any other *Chakra* in the spine. Move up feeling distinctly that the energy crosses the *Fontanelle* and reaches the *8th Chakra.* Concentrate there and enjoy the equilibrium state between inhalation and exhalation. Exhale sweetly, letting *Prana* descend from the *8th Chakra* to *Muladhara*. (Feel distinctly that the energy, coming down, crosses the *Fontanelle*.) When you feel the need to inhale repeat the procedure. Repeat again and again until the state of your consciousness is totally changed and your breath is very subtle, almost non-existent.

Now inhale sweetly from *Muladhara* to the *8th Chakra*, raising breath and *Prana*. Exhale sweetly from the *8th Chakra* down the spine, *but do not come down intentionally to the Muladhara Chakra*. You will see that the exhaling current reaches spontaneously a certain point in the spine. This point is not necessarily one of the different *Chakras*. Wherever this point is, it is fundamental to feel it clearly inside the spine. This point *becomes the starting point of the next inhalation.* Inhale then from this new starting point into the *8th Chakra*. The current comes up through the spine: now the

length of the path is obviously shorter. Pause there. Exhale sweetly down the spine: probably the exhaling current makes a shorter path, shorter than the previous. This is the new starting point. Inhale from this new position upwards...

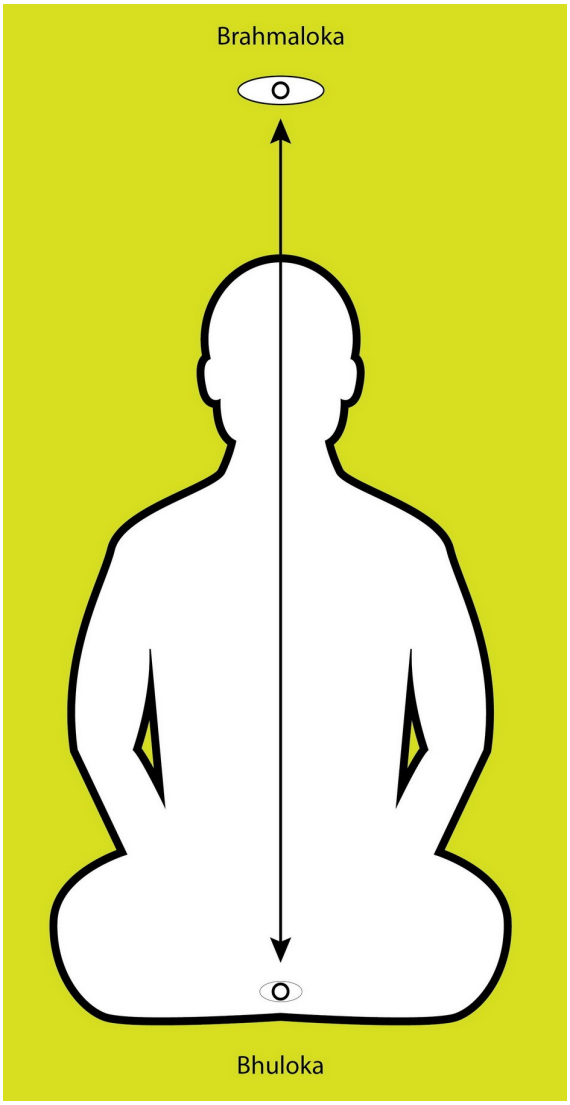


Figure 20. The breath moves between Bhuloka and Brahmaloka and then dissolves

By repeating this procedure, you will reach a particular mental and physical condition in which you will remain breathless, *with total focus on the 8th Chakra*. If, after a long pause, the breath appears again, repeat the process from the beginning (inhaling from *Muladhara*). Go ahead patiently, unperturbed. The point is to make the breath cease, entering a dimension where it is no longer necessary.

[IV.5] Meditation upon the light shining in Cerebellum

Rotate your awareness around the *8th Chakra*. Perceive a ball of Light that makes a circulation around your *8th Chakra* and then touches the center of this *Chakra*. Repeat many times this perception without any mental chanting of *Mantra*. Let the ball of Light do not come inward after tracing one circle but come down, piercing the *Fontanelle* at an angle. While the ray is coming down raise your chin and feel the ray of Light reaching your *Cerebellum*. Remain immobile for a few seconds, wholly immersed in the intensity of the dazzling white Light shining from there to the whole brain. Lower your chin without losing the concentration upon the Light. Rest a moment there, and then repeat the procedure. Gradually during the next days repeat the experience more and more times. The Divine Light becomes stable at the *Cerebellum*.

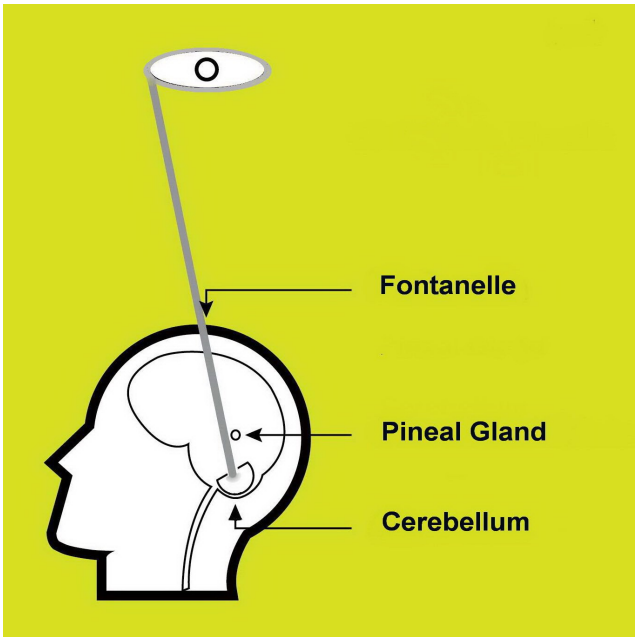


Figure 21. The Light moves from the 8th Chakra to Cerebellum

[IV.6] Meditation upon the light shining in the Pineal Gland

Perceiving constantly the Divine Light in *Cerebellum* is a very high state, but you must learn how to go beyond it. Our goal is to learn to locate your *Pineal Gland* and enter it.

In order to achieve this goal, intuitively condense all the Light in *Cerebellum* and direct it toward your *Pineal Gland*. This gland is located very near the *Cerebellum*, but slightly forward and above it, along a line forming a 60° angle (with the pavement.) A substantial help comes by doing a movement like the one utilized to obtain the coming down of Light and focusing it in the *Cerebellum*, but more slow and almost imperceptible.

The movement should be only hinted, with no muscular tension at all. The last immersion in the Light happens after this slight movement, when you are almost immobile: there is a sort of internal tension that guides you intuitively toward the *Pineal Gland*.

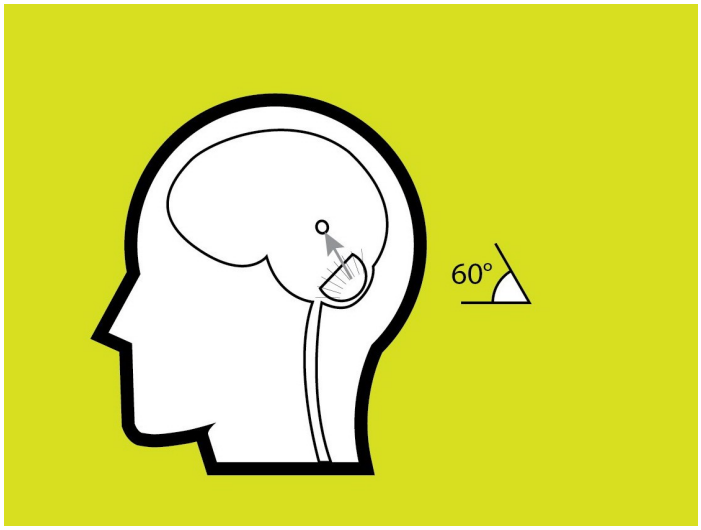


Figure 22. The Light moves from the Cerebellum to the Pineal gland

Repeat and repeat your attempt until you succeed in entering the *Pineal Gland*. Here the union with the Divine takes place. The state of TAT TVAM ASI manifests. During this time of divine oneness, one is devoid of body consciousness and unaware of one's surroundings.

> After the Omkar sound ceases to exist
> the Effulgent Form appears.
> Nothing exists except the Sun of the Soul.
> I, Shama Churn, am that Sun.
> *Lahiri Mahasaya* [12]

[12] Lahiri Mahasaya is Shama Churn – Shyama Charan. This sentence is contained in Lahiri Mahasaya's diaries. Many sentences from the diaries are to be found in the book Purana Purusha by Dr. Ashok Kumar Chatterjee

CHAPTER 12

HOW TO GUIDE A PERSON WHO STARTS THE KRIYA PATH

(The teaching is individual, yet something in general can be said)

[I] *Proposal of an excellent routine, just to begin.*
[II] *In time add something inspired to the Second level of Kriya*
[III] *In time add something inspired to the Third level of Kriya*
[IV] *How to go ahead*

Small preamble

In the preceding chapters (second part of the book) I have tried to give the opportunity to familiarize with various techniques of *Kriya Yoga*. Perhaps the reader has made small experiments with the practices and gotten some results.

However, if had to teach to a real live person, I wonder: of all that you can find here, what is worthwhile to practice? I want to see good, solid results, not small satisfactions. In the preceding chapters I had tried to describe so many techniques, too techniques. I didn't want to censor anything. But now responsibility is mine: I must choose a didactic plan in which there are few techniques, but very good, absolutely good techniques. In order to select them, I don't have hesitations. I take as guide my past experiences – I cannot act differently. I have practiced each procedure described in the second part of the book, I have also observed closely some researchers who practiced them: I know what is the best in the long time. In my sensibility and understanding, a certain procedure "works perfectly" when a *kriyaban* obtains through it the overwhelming experience of the spiritual dimension and emerges from it with a "good" heart. [13]

A person must be introduced to the meaning of the spiritual path – not with bookish rhetoric but with keen sincerity. Most people who decide to learn Kriya Yoga and travel along the spiritual path don't have, and cannot have, the faintest idea of what this choice implies.

[13] One of the first tenets that I received from my first Kriya school was that if a spiritual technique is not received from the correct channels, has no value, it is ineffective. Well I had evidence to the contrary. A good technique, no matter how it has been received, is all what an even-tempered person needs to develop a positive, loving attitude toward the spiritual path. This attitude is the essence of the spiritual life.

I must explain that besides the physical birth (… eating, working, creating a family, having a good time, thinking what our "group" or "flock" thinks) and mental birth (… finding the pleasure of thinking with one's own head) there exists the spiritual birth. Those who have been born only to the mental life cannot understand what the spiritual birth is. The birth to the spiritual life rarely happens and when it happens it is not an intellectual understanding or a decision to live in a certain way. It happens after a strong experience of internal bliss, usually coupled with the experience of a strong energetic current in the spine. Sometimes this experience is preceded by an unexplainable fear, even anguish.

What must be clearly stated is that entering the Kriya path happens when our awareness enters the spine. Our spiritual path is not therefore a path of "personal growth", or a decision of adhering to some austerity or moral tenet. This is what we need to understand in Kriya Yoga. Other spiritual paths have their own philosophies.

Our spiritual pah is not born from our mental efforts but from contacting the joy that is in the center of ourselves and it is somehow related to our spine, to the spiritual centers (Chakras) that are discovered along it and to the vision that happens with the so called "third eye." The spiritual path is not an improvement, a cleaning of what we are. No, nothing of this. Therefore my didactic plan must contain something that leads one to *Sushumna*, the subtle channel in the spine. All the rest will happen subsequently. Of course this will add a new depth and sense of meaning to our life.

The Divine is met in the spine and this happens through Pranayama. This should be practiced almost every day, with love, passion in what you are doing with a trusting heart open to receive its effects. You must have the courage to move with all your being toward a new birth. Day after day you will discover that this "New" is purposeful expansion of awareness, peaceful joy, true Beauty.

The recommendation (already given in the eighth chapter) is not to waste time with books, with a psychological work of improvement of our qualities. All this doesn't serve no useful purpose. Do not feed the frantic activity of the mind.

[I] Proposal of an excellent routine, just to begin.

The routine that I suggest to start is the following one

FIRST KRIYA ROUTINE	
[1] Awaken the Prana in the body	Simple physical exercises followed by deep breaths [time required: 4 minutes]
[2] Make the entrance of Sushumna free from Ida and Pingala	Forward bendings & Maha Mudra
[3] Invite Kundalini to enter Sushumna	Nadi Sodhana with inverted breath + Tadan Kriya
[4] Guiding Kundalini up and down	Particular form of Pranayama (6 insp. + 6 esp.)
[5] Kriya Pranayama as taught by Sri M. (108)	
[6] % repeat Maha Mudra. You can close your routine here or go ahead seeking the breathless state utilizing procedure [7]	
[7] Transform the nature or the breath	Particular form of Pranayama (calm breath between Muladhara and each Chakra)
Lahiri Mahasaya's Uttam Pranayama (excellent Pranayama)	Kriya Pranayama up to Chakra 7

Opening remark

I am totally satisfied with the *Kriya Pranayama* as explained by Sri Mukherjee. I find it unequaled. Obviously I feel free to practice it inside a routine that I deem will draw the best from it. The epoch in which I blindly obeyed the strict injunctions of Gurus and Acharyas has ended. *Kriya Pranayama* is, in my daily routine, preceded by *Maha Mudra*. Not only that: the action of *Maha Mudra* is completed by a particular effort that consists in applying three simple techniques conceived to win the obstruction at the base of the spine. After this preliminary work, *Kriya Pranayama* is a paradisaical experience.

As you know, in this form of *Kriya Pranayama* the effort is devoted to knock with 6+6 mental chanting of *Om* in the central point of *Kutastha*. Then, after a proper amount of breaths, a *kriyaban* starts to perceive the spine and, later, the *Chakras*. This experience is blissful. At the end of 108

Kriya breaths, I repeat the *Maha Mudra* and then I add a simple procedure to refine the nature of the breath. This is optionally followed by an effort to reach the lofty state that Lahiri Mahasaya called *Uttam Pranayama*. That's all: this for me is the "*First Kriya*" routine.

Comment to each line of the schedule

[1] You cannot start from nothing or from hours of pure intellectual study. Practice some exercises to awaken the *Prana* in the body. At least stroll casually, massage your body and breathe deeply. Few minutes are sufficient.

[2] The technique of the "*Forward Bendings*" as taught by Swami Hariharananda is fantastic, his *Maha Mudra* too. You can find both in chapter 7 of my book. By practicing these patiently, both nostrils will open and you get balance of mind and calmness in the body.

[3] When you experience the effect of procedures [3] and [4] you won't ask why these techniques should be practiced but why you have not practiced them before. [14]

The *Muladhara Chakra* has a big role in helping the movement of the energy from the body to *Sushumna*. Helping this process is an essential action to be done every day with unbending determination. Concentration upon *Muladhara* is therefore necessary, unavoidable. Indeed, the concentration must be very strong! Perhaps it is for this reason that most part of *Kriya* schools do not give lightly this teaching. What a pity!

As far as we are concerned, let us forget wrong information according to which the lower *Chakras* are "tamasic" (negative.) No, through those *Chakras* a very important energy moves along *Sushumna.* This energy is called *Kundalini*. In conclusion when you work with the lower *Chakras* to open the spinal channel, and you do this before practicing the usual form of *Kriya Pranayama*, know for certain that this is the wisest thing that you can do!

First exercise: focus upon the *Muladhara Chakra*. Close the right nostril and inhale through the left nostril while mentally chanting *Om* 3 times. Visualize that you are attracting the energy contained in the inhaled air and bring this energy down around your *Muladhara*. Close both nostrils and mentally chant *Om* 12 times while holding your breath. At the same time

[14] Unfortunately some essential technical details have not been taught, while other authentic crap has been spoon fed to us like with a drill.

apply the three basic *Bandhas*. Then exhale through the right nostril, while mentally chanting *Om* 6 times.

Repeat the procedure inhaling through the right nostril, pause with *Bandhas* and exhale from the left nostril ….. These two breaths count as one unity. Practice only three unities. In the future you can increase such number with caution. You have understood that during this procedure the concentration on the *Muladhara Chakra* is the most important detail.

Second exercise: a light and prudent form of *Tadan Kriya* follows. Inhale deeply with both nostrils feeling the breath that comes down from *Kutastha* to *Muladhara*. While holding the breath practice the three main *Bandhas*. [15] Feel the *Prana* in *Muladhara*, ready to enter the spine. Lift your body, with the help of the hands, of few millimeters and then let the buttocks touch the seat with a mild jolt. Have three jolts – be sure that you are holding your breath during them! Then exhale, slowly and deeply, releasing the three *Bandhas*, perceiving an ecstatic feeling. This detail is very important: it is a signal that the *Prana* has entered the spine and *Kundalini* starts its travel upwards. The mental energy (not just the physical action) that you put in this exercise is decisive. The action of *Tadan Kriya* is called *Maha Veda Mudra* "*Mudra* of the great perforation". Repeat two more times the practice of *Tadan* for a total of 9 jolts

[4] Stop thinking that *Kundalini* is a particular power that, as a little snake, dozes in the *Muladhara*. No, *Kundalini* is the vital energy (*Prana*) present in the body. When this energy enters *Sushumna* it has an overwhelming effect. Actually it might seem a snake that awakens, however it is nothing but our *Prana* and we surely have no reason to fear our *Prana* which sustains our life. Therefore courage! Let us rise *Kundalini* a little bit at a time, *Chakra* after *Chakra*.

In this exercise you have six deep, strong, complete inhalations. Each one is necessarily followed by a light exhalation. Then you have six deep, strong, complete exhalations – each one is necessarily prepared by a light inhalation.

Coming up. Each strong inhalation, marked by the particular deaf sound of *Ujjayi*, guides *Kundalini* into a different *Chakra* in the usual order: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. With the first inhalation, *Kundalini* is felt in the first *Chakra*; with

[15] The three *Bandhas* are this*:* contract the muscles at the base of the spine (*Mula Bandha*), draw inside the abdominal muscles by contracting them (*Uddiyana Bandha*) and low the chin on the chest (*Jalandhara Bandha*.)

the second inhalation *Kundalini* is guided from *Muladhara* to the second *Chakra*. With the third inhalation *Kundalini* is guided from *Muladhara* to the third *Chakra* crossing the second *Chakra*. With the fourth inhalation *Kundalini* is guided from *Muladhara*, second and third *Chakra* to the fourth *Chakra*. With the fifth inhalation *Kundalini* is guided from *Muladhara* to the fifth *Chakra* passing through all the intermediate *Chakras*. With the sixth inhalation *Kundalini* is guided from *Muladhara* to *Kutastha* through all the intermediate *Chakras*.

We have said that each inhalation is followed by a light exhalation. This exhalation is not marked by the *Ujjayi* sound, it is almost invisible, it does not move *Prana*. It lets it remain where it is. I know that some *Kriya* schools describe this "coming up" process as a fragmented inhalation. No, it is not like that.

Going down. The procedure of going down is perfectly symmetric to the procedure of going up – you have only to reverse the role of inhalation and exhalation.

After a light, almost invisible inhalation, have a strong exhalation (producing in the throat the particular deaf sound of *Ujjayi*) and increase the presence of *Kundalini* in *Kutastha*. Then another "invisible" inhalation without sound prepares the strong exhalation that guides *Kundalini* from *Kutastha* to the *fifth Chakra*....you know how to complete this procedure....

This is one cycle. Three cycles are recommended. Please do not complicate this procedure, which should be natural and pleasant, by asking where to mentally chant *Om*, how many *Oms*... you will chant *Om* abundantly during the next *Kriya Pranayama*.

NOTE 1
You will surely love it and will practice it when needed, in different moments of your *Kriya* routine. While *Nadi Sodhana* with inverse breath and *Tadan* are always practiced together, this exercise can also be practiced independently.

NOTE 2
Some wonder if the short exhalations while coming up and the short inhalations while coming down are necessary. Well, let us consider the coming up part. The inhalations are so deep and strong that for the most part of persons it is impossible to have six of them without exhaling a little bit, making space in the lungs for the next intake of air.

NOTE 3
Endeavor to feel the difference in the perception of *Kundalini* when you go up compared to the perception when you come down. The guided ascent of *Kundalini* brings to you a limited bliss – "limited" by your mind-created limits. The spontaneous but conscious descent of *Kundalini* is Divine Light, beyond

your limited self. It infuses the cells of your body with eternal life.

From now onwards I give for granted that you keep your tongue in baby Kechari position. Of course practice Kechari proper if you are able to do it.

[5] Here you have your 108 breaths. We have explained this technique in chapter 8. If your mind is not destroyed by a chaotic life, you can experiment a true, real heaven. Your whole being will be collected in the space between the spiritual eye and the seat of *Ajna Chakra*.

[6] Here you can practice *Maha Mudra* and stop here (if possible you can practice *Yoni Mudra* also) or, if you have time ad disposal, you can have a couple of steps towards perfection.

[7] This exercise has not a specific name. It transforms the nature of the breath and makes you approach the breathless state. We have already met this procedure. [16] Here we describe it in a simpler form, equally effective. *Muladhara* is connected with each *Chakra* in quick succession. The breath is very short.

Focus the attention on the *Muladhara.* When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the *Second Chakra*. Try to have a good perception of this *Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on the *Muladhara*. Make a short pause. When it comes natural to inhale, inhale without forcing the breath and pause an instant in the *Third Chakra*. Try to have a good perception of this *Chakra*. Exhale when it comes natural to exhale and focus again on the *Muladhara*. Make a short pause..... You have understood how to go ahead.... Repeat the procedure between the *Muladhara* and the fourth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* and the fifth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* and *Bindu*; *Muladhara* and *Medulla*; *Muladhara* and fifth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* - fourth *Chakra*; *Muladhara* - third *Chakra*; *Muladhara* – Second *Chakra*. These 10 calm breaths are one cycle. If at this point your breath has not drastically calmed down, you practice one or two cycles more.

NOTE 1
The described procedure is really effective to calm the breath. If one day it does not work, utilize the following preparation: "Watch" the natural breath in each *Chakra*. Inhale feeling the energy entering a *Chakra*, then exhale feeling the

[16] See chapter 9 → [IV] Technique to enter the breathless state

energy leaving the same *Chakra*. The first breath happens in *Muladhara*, the second in *Swadhisthana*.... The whole physical system calms down. At this point try the main technique [7] and you will discover that it works.

NOTE 2
If you really want to reach the breathless state, you have to become aware of the energy that sustains the life in your body. This doesn't happen automatically. You must feel, nay, REALIZE that the internal energy, like a fresh current, sustains each cell of your body. Another good mental action is to recall your conception of the Divine. I mean to recall a Beauty that shocks you and creates mental silence in your thought. Remember Ramana Maharshi and his mountain Arunachala.

> "When it drew me up to it, stilling the mind, and I came close I saw it stand unmoving."

"Unmoving", "Immobile", so becomes your mind when it is shocked by Beauty.

[Last line of the schedule] The exercise [7] open the doors to the opportunity of improving *Kriya Pranayama* beyond imagination. You can now enjoy a *Pranayama* which moves totally "free." "Free" because the energy moves unobstructed from *Muladhara* to *Sahasrara*.

Decrease the pressure of your concentration on *Kutastha*. Perceive the vastness that absorbs your awareness at the top of your head. From now onwards the totality of the awareness is fixed in *Sahasrara*. Instead of vibrating *Om* (6+6 times) in *Kutastha,* you vibrate them in the *Fontanelle*. This way of practicing Pranayama has already been explained in chapter 8. I had written that such method can be employed after about fifty breaths. We are now in that condition. Very important is to enjoy the sound produced by the breath. Make it more and more subtle and beautiful. This sound is smooth and unbroken like the continuous pouring of oil from a bottle. The more you relax yourself in such sound, the more it becomes similar to that produced by a small flute. The more your Pranayama is near to what Lahiri called Uttam Pranayama (excellent Pranayama.)

The sound of the flute intensifies the process of *Kundalini* awakening. This process starts when you perceive the authentic vibration of the sound of the *Om*. This is possible and will undoubtedly happen if you go ahead for great numbers of repetitions. This practice is a real jewel. You will perceive the upper part of your head as glowing with light. A beautiful sensation of fresh air that comes up crossing the Chakras will make you feel filled with energy. A sweet warm that goes down permeating every zone of the body

from top to bottom will infuse a great feeling of comfort. The practice seems to have a life of its own. You will have the impression to cross a mental state, that is similar to suddenly fall asleep and then return to full awareness realizing that you are basking in the spiritual light. It's like a plane emerging from clouds into a clear transparent sky. You are contacting the sublime reality hinted by Lahiri Mahasaya when he refers to the state of "Eternal Tranquility."

[II] In time add something inspired to the Second level of Kriya [17]

The follow addition is to be practiced after point [7] of the above schedule

[II.1] Opening remark

I have also received by Sri M. some vague indications about the higher steps of the *Kriya* path. I have tacitly assumed that a more specific explanation from Sri Mukherjee would never come. I think that, in his opinion, the understanding of the higher *Kriyas* comes spontaneously through meditation-born intuition. This may happen after years of Kriya Pranayama. Therefore what I describe here is not "his" *Second Kriya,* but only what I have inferred from his words. After some serious experimentation I am sure that what I explain here is strong, very strong. It is your choice and decision that put it into practice.

The *Second Kriya* aims at dissolving the knots contained in the *Chakras*. It is based on guiding with deep mental pressure the *Prana* (*Kundalini*) within each *Chakra.* Later in time, such procedure is helped by the practice of *Thokar*.

[II.2] Explanation of the Second Kriya

Resume the practice of the *Kriya Pranayama* but with an almost nonexistent breath. Procedure [7] has prepared you for that. The meaning of "almost nonexistent breath" will be understood only with the practice. However I try to give you an idea of how to find the correct attitude.

Imagine that evolution has provided you with another way of breathing. Let us suppose that inhalation means that breath and Prana enter through

[17] "Inspired" means "conformed" to the theoretical vision of Kriya in four phases as suggested by Sri M.. The writer was not initiated by Sri M.

the pores of your skin, come near to *Muladhara* and slowly come up through the spine. Exhalation means that breath and *Prana* come down through the spine, spread through *Muladhara* to all the cells of your body. To be more clear: when you feel the energy in *Muladhara,* slowly guide it toward the *Second Chakra*. How do you guide the energy? Mainly through will power, with the minimum of visualization. If you are in the breathless state you will see that this process requires only the effort of concentration. If you are NOT in the breathless state you will see that this process requires a very, very subtle breath.

When you are in the second *Chakra*, feel it well then go ahead guiding Kundalini through the Chakras, upward and then downward. Reach Chakras 3, 4, 5, Bindu, Medulla, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1. This round lasts one minute or some seconds more. Do you find this too difficult? Do you think you won't succeed having a complete round in one minute? You will.

Now don't worry, accept what happens. Don't worry even if you feel the necessity of having some intermediary short breath ... Don't worry: after some months, after the full mastery of procedure [7], one round of your *Second Kriya* will last one minute. Practice 12 rounds.

So, what is *Second Kriya*? *Second Kriya* consists in moving in a very deep, piercing way, the energy through the *Chakras* without utilizing the breathing way that you have known in *Kriya Pranayama*. You are able to feel the energy moving by the sheer power of your will.

Accept that in the beginning your breath is not perfectly still or perfectly subtle. However you will surely remark that your way of breathing has surely changed. In time you will see that this procedure transforms you even if it will not immediately give you an ecstatic state.

[II.3] Help

Actually a great help in reaching a deep practice is resuming the practice of [4] "Guiding *Kundalini*."

You have already discovered that procedure [4] has indeed a great power to help you go beyond breath. Well, by repeating procedure [4] in a slower, internalized way, you discover that the *Second Kriya* happens more easily. Procedure [7] is clearly another useful help. The two procedures utilized separately or one after the other [7 after 4] are your guardian angels that help you to dissolve all difficulties in the practice of *Second Kriya*.

[II.4] Utilization of Thokar

To complete the explanation of the *Second Kriya* we must remark that Lahiri Mahasaya taught a procedure to deepen the mental pressure on the *Chakras*. This technique is the simple form of *Thokar* where the strokes of *Thokar* are directed to the first four *Chakras*.

Read again the description of the technique "[I.3] elementary form of the *Thokar*: action on all the *Chakras*" that it is found in *Chapter* 9. The problem is: what is the best way of utilizing this procedure? Well, I think that we can made a bad use of it, a moderate and an excellent use.

Very bad use: one becomes exalted of the first effects of this *Thokar,* skips the mental practice of the *Second Kriya* and "plays" with the Thokar for some days, just like a child with a new toy. Then gradually leaves it, thinking that it doesn't deserve our attention, is worth nothing, nay ... it disturbs.

Moderate use: to let some months pass by with the sole application of the pure mental practice, then, as a completion of the mental practice, introduce *Thokar* every day for a moderate number of rounds (12 -24).

Excellent use: After some months of a moderate use of Thokar, practice an incremental routine of it – starting from 36x2... up to 36x36.

[III] In time add something inspired to the Third level of Kriya

The follow addition is to be practiced after point [7] of the above schedule

[III.1] Preliminary remark

Once completed the work to dissolve the knots contained in the *Chakras* we are ready to enter *Kutastha* and to dissolve the last obstacle: the forces that prevent to enter it. Despite what you might think, you should not persevere in creating mental pressure on the point between the eyebrows. You must also work on the *Chakra* of the heart and on the *Dantian*. In order to act upon *Chakra* of the heart we use the *Advanced form of the Thokar,* in order to act upon the *Dantian* we shall use a higher form of *Navi Kriya* – in concrete terms this is the central technique of the Tibetan Yoga. Put together these two procedures finally succeed in opening the Muladhara-Kutastha door (Rudra Granti.)

[III.2] Explanation of the Third Kriya

The procedure is divided into three parts: two preparatory and one specific for the action of unfastening the Rudra Granti

K3.1 *Strong action upon the heart: advanced form of Thokar*
K3.2 *Strong action upon the Dantian: Navi Kundalini*
K3.3 *Specific exercise to unfasten the knot of Muladhara-Kutastha*

K3.1 Strong action upon the heart: advanced form of Thokar

We start with the *Advanced form of Thokar* (see Chapter 9.) Inhale, hold, *Te Va Su, Te Va Su*.... many, many rotations of the head; feel intoxication and warm in the heart Chakra. Repeat as much as you can, exhale and start *Navi Kundalini*.

K3.2 Strong action upon the Dantian: Navi Kundalini

This technique is the "*Vase breathing*" of the *Tibetan Yoga*. I call it "*Navi Kundalini*" because from the *Navi* (*Dantian) Kundalini* raises to reach the upper part of the head.

Practical instruction. Inhale feeling the Prana that enters the body with the coolness of the air. Breath and energy enter through the nostrils, touch the

point between the eyebrows, then *Medulla*, then the cervical *Chakra*, the heart *Chakra* and finally the *Dantian* region. Feel the aforesaid points with great clarity. During the inhalation, abiding by the principles of Reversed Breathing, continuously increase the contraction of the abdomen. Intensify the pressure on the whole region of the Dantian. While the energy comes down assume gradually the three *Bandhas:* contract the muscles at the base of the spine (*Mula Bandha*), draw inside the abdominal muscles by contracting them (*Uddiyana Bandha*) and low the chin on the chest (*Jalandhara Bandha*.)

Having completed the inhalation, intensify the pressure is upon the *Dantian* region. Push down gently with your diaphragm in order to firmly compress the energy brought down from above. Keep this pressure for a minimum of 12 tranquil mental chants of *Om*.

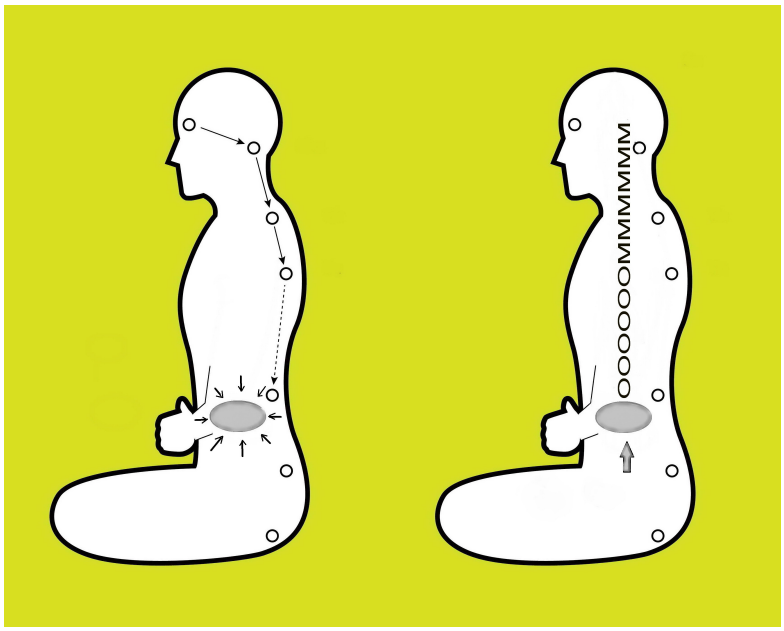


Figure 23. The energy contained in the Dantian is squeezed upwards

Exhale while mentally chanting a long *Oooommmm* (the longest *Om* you can) perceiving *Kundalini* and Bliss being pushed upwards. Don't ask whether the movement of *Kundalini* happens inside *Sushumna* or it happens along another channel in the front of the spine. The energy knows where to flow. Repeat the procedure at least 10 times. Feel that Anahata *Chakra* is warm, pervaded by the internal flame.

If you have more time to repeat another ten times: the warm sensation reaches the *Vishuddha Chakra*. After ten more breaths, the warm sensation has reached the middle part of your had. After ten more breaths, the warm sensation has reached *Fontanelle*. All this is a giant step forward in the spiritual path. The procedure we have described is the best way of making

all the effects of *Thokar* be absorbed and expanded in a state of bliss very near to *Samadhi*.

K3.3 Specific exercise to unfasten the knot of Muladhara-Kutastha
Let us experience now, in each Chakra (1, 2, 3, 4, 5, *Bindu*, *Medulla*, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1),
a "Navi Kundalini" in small dimensions – that is inside each *Chakra.*

Practical instruction: in each *Chakra* do the following actions:
[a] inhale letting breath and energy come down from the nostrils into the seat of the *Chakra*.
[b] sweetly hold your breath for 12 mental chants of *Om* intensifying the energetic sensation inside the *Chakra*.
[c] exhale feeling that the *Chakra* melts with *Kutastha*. Don't visualize that the *Chakra* is coming upwards. Nay, find the light of *Kutastha* inside the *Chakra*. Have the experience that that *Chakra* BECOMES *Kutastha* itself.

If you do the previous actions (inhaling, holding, exhaling) in a Chakra, and repeat and repeat this action if necessary, at a certain moment you realize you are in Kutastha and you see the light assuming the tonality of the *Tattwa* governing that specific *Chakra*. In this technique we counsel to repeat the action (inhaling, holding, exhaling) exactly three times for each *Chakra*. A complete round throughout the *Chakras* requires 36 breaths.

By repeating the procedure, it happens that the breath disappears and your action becomes a pure mental action. What is beautiful it to realize that you have moved through the *Chakras* only apparently, in reality you have always remained in *Kutastha*. The more effort you employ in this practice, the more you will dissolve your dependency from the *Tattwas*.

How much to practice? A complete cycle (36 "breaths") is very good. Three cycles is fantastic.

[IV] How to go ahead
Let us reconsider the initial scheme with seven points.
In the space after the seventh point we have introduced the Second and the Third Kriya. There is no meaning in suggesting other additions. It would be something unproductive. What we have added was not to give the illusion of progress. It was something crucial. Nothing similar is thinkable now. As for the future I would counsel something concerning the *Chakra* of the heart, for example the "Prayer of the heart." [You can read some ideas in chapters 13 and 14]

Those who have practiced all this have grown in maturity. I cannot discuss their spiritual experiences neither now nor in the future. It is their life. What I want to emphasize now is my hope that their attitude toward organizations and traveling Gurus has changed. I hope they have taken the decision of not allowing anyone to put them in the humiliating position of appearing a beggar of techniques and of discipline. I hope that no one accepts more reprimands: "Be glad of what you have..." If organizations or masters are not able to teach, let them do another activity. No. If you ask something specific, clearly expressed, deprived of insane, delusional, maniacal characteristics, you deserve an explication, without that the teacher escapes from their duty.

As you have seen, in this last chapter, the explanations are short, not maniacally precise. Various details are left to intuition. If you have questions please write [18] However my best reward is that you learn to depend from your intuition. Accept gladly this and become a master of yourself

[18] I learned Nadi Sodhana and Ujjayi Pranayama reading few lines (very less than a page) in a book of Hatha Yoga. I practised and I had in few months my first experience of Kundalini. My life changed and after having read AOY I undertook my search of the Kriya Yoga. Other books that I purchased full of enthusiasm didn't serve me to nothing: they were " excessive." The essence of the Spiritual Path was already penetrated in my conscience. I read endless words but from that moment onwards every footstep forward happened through the intuition born through the practice of the Pranayama. The initial result had started an unstoppable virtuous circle.